

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND ART

Horizon

EDITED BY CYRIL CONNOLLY

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COMMENT

IN this issue Stephen Spender, who has just spent fifteen months in America, gives his impression of the literary scene and the situation of American writers. It is a gloomy picture, though an even gloomier one could be painted here: indeed I wish I could paint, for it resembles the moment when the Sleeping Beauty pricked herself with a pin. There they all stand, our distinguished authors, exquisite puzzled petrified figures, professors of this, doctors of that, companions of honour; their glasses raised to their lips, 'gentlemen, Miss Austen', 'gentlemen, Mrs. Woolf', 'ladies, I give you Mr. E. M. Forster', great publishers, fine broadcasters, polished lecturers, keen editors as ever kept pen from paper, fierce in hall and kind in fray:

'The varying year with blade and sheaf
Clothes and reclothes the happy plains.
Here rests the sap within the leaf
Here stays the blood along the veins . . .
Here droops the banner on the tower
On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
The peacock in his laurel bower
The parrot in his gilded wires.

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs:
In these, in those the life is stayed.
The mantles from the golden pegs
Droop silently: no sound is made.

When, lured by dull day-dreams of bread and butter, we tear ourselves away from the fine fastidious frozen spectacle it is to rejoice in the talent of young American writers, inhabitants of that 'other America' which Spender describes as in opposition to the America which we all dislike and its chief glory—as, in the days when there was an 'other' England we turned to Lawrence, Huxley, Auden, Isherwood. For many of the unknown and original contributors to this magazine are now American. In the last year we have published nineteen American authors in fourteen numbers, and they would seem especially to excel in poetry and the short story. In this number we have a long poem of great

beauty by an almost unknown Californian, Thomas Parkinson, and a story by another young author, William Goyen, who has just begun to appear in print. But in much that we do not print, the American talent seems superior; the stories which are not quite good enough will be more original, fresh and vigorous, the poems will be modern, interesting failures—never that stream of Victorian cliché which continues to pour from so many aspiring hearts nearer home. Even American readers praise, attack, criticize—but at least write.

Meanwhile two new magazines have appeared to which we wish all encouragement. May they disturb the prevailing apathy with more success. They are *The Month*, a Catholic review of high intellectual calibre where several of our contributors may be encountered in more congenial surroundings (in the first number is an excellent article on Proust by Martin Turnell, and spirited reviews by Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene, etc.) and *Points*—a bilingual review of short imaginative sketches by young writers edited in French and English by Marcel Bisiaux and Sindbad Vail (110 francs, 75 Bd. St. Germain).

Bisiaux was the young editor of '48 which appeared from the Île Saint Louis, and *Points* is more reminiscent of the fresh Franco-American aspect of early 'transition'. The magazine has no avowed policy and no editorial, but the first words of the first story (which no printer in England or America would ever set up) make one hope that a literature which is intelligent, ironical, direct and care-free, may be on its way in.

THOMAS PARKINSON
SEPTEMBER ELEGY

How many dawns in how many Septembers have I arisen to shining mornings,
With all the apples fallen, the garden in my eye lolling in the fallen fruit,
I have walked into morning's light as it flowed in my window,

I have stretched toward its luxury
Into the rose dawn, with the heart open ; I have given it fealty,
Yet never any like this, never, in all the cluttered years given witness to by this
My room, receptacle of my daily rituals,
This long familiar, shadow of my dying body, this book, these poems, echoes of
my substantial being.

These my witnesses have been daily with me, at times recessed, expelled, shoved
out of light,

Ready and a little anxious to appear, they have awaited all the hour when I
would admit them,

Then quietly took possession, rocked or stoned me, gave rest or bruise,
And their peace and contention are my thrice-daily companions, my proofs ;
My convictors, they. They bring me down, imprison me, they rive my freedom.

Open to dawn after dawn, I have trusted the light, even the burning ;
I have praised always men and women who walked the slope upward, laughter
on their lips,

Who have walked toward love as a venture, willing to live and die in grace
only.

I have loved women and men gravely, and walked as a stranger among
strangers.

I have been beaten and a laughing stock, and sat in the prisons of enemies,
I have been traitor to friends with a laugh and flourish, or have betrayed slowly
In circuitous ways the blood devises, the mind despises and admits
To be rocked, stoned, cast and rested in labour and repose.

I have been open to many a dawn, many a September. I have fallen with
sunsets,

Deceived myself, forgetting those convictors who come at last,
Shadow of my body, this pen, this book, this sudden feeling
Which pillories and baffles me. Yet never a dawn in any September as fair and
punishing as this.

II

Break, heart. Though one another and ourselves take us home at last,
 An open heart must be broken before its virtue will inspire all body.
 Only a broken heart earns love and grace; what's virtue but a broken heart?

Though in my daily walk the friends I meet converse, no-need to shout
 Across dense wild thickets where the asp crawls, the aspen quivers;
 Though as I speak to eight and sixty people I speak in clarity;
 Though as night comes hunching down and edges round the corners of my
 room.

I stroll with the great and nightly come to know them better;
 Crescent in all powers of the mind, stronger now in body;
 I ask my heart to break and know no trouble in complying.

Those who dream a life past conceiving in their fragile adolescence,
 Have need, great need of wisdom in their breaking youth;
 And yet how heart gets broken doesn't matter. Only the cleavage, the
 distinction.

Aspiration for a world of gentleness the streets won't grant, nor solitary forest,
 The wish in the indolent dreamer's heart that finds no sanction,
 The will toward beauty, the unrequited love for a world gone murderous,
 The single aspiration for a common good, and blindness, blindness all around;
 This is not all the cause for heart-break, but it's enough.

And if we find a woman we love and discover
 She's married to another or walks in the desert of her own ambitions or will
 betray?

Even without that crowning distinction, heart-break's a general contagious
 glory.

Those who aspire suffer at last; grow wise and lined and learn to laugh,
 Those extravagant people; William, Robert, all those others:
 Have winced and howled but turned it to laughter, love, and work, wise and
 lined;

For lines give order and distinction, and make one finally handsome, austere,
 lonely.

III

A proud and lonely man has little need for arrogance nor to protest his value.
 He walks in a room and transmutes its tenor, and if he laughs the room grows
 wide,

So much has entered. Thus I imagine hollow Dante enlarged the night,

That proud spirit of the past, the great poet
Who sang through life and walked unendingly into the light,
And knew dark night's bestowal and the yielding of a sheerest abyss.
I wonder if a hymn out of childhood still applies, O Lord I am not worthy
That thou should'st come to me, and walk to the window softly whistling.
Leaning out into the night, I would pray to that magnanimous God,
So friendly a God, so wondrous strange and fair, who stones, who rocks me.
I who am strenuous with health and pure delight, would invoke his
benediction

On a spirit more wild and chastened than I'd thought possible,
On a world fair and dying that my eyes look on in love and anguish:
Improbable California, this house of my friends, the vineyard, all those
apples,
A world most fortunate and beautiful; and damned and raving from China to
Palestine.

IV

May from tact and galliard joyousness grow, at last, grow what the mind
yearns,
Peace, peace, we have fulfilled pity and outworn grief, thumbed it to death,
dog-eared grief;
Peace in this September, let death lie fallow in his marble serried orchards.

O spacious earth, surely you have endured our conquests, but we have not, and
lost,
Lost what the farmer knows in his green vineyard, lost what I know in my green
study,
Lost knowledge of the leaf, lost the fingers of touch and veneration, lost,
except in vague places,
Solitary men with their grave women, reposing, taking the wind in their eyes.

O spacious earth, scarless almost, while on the aspiring hands which lift to
benediction
Fall shadow and witherer, fall, not glowing leaf nor any annunciation of
mould and lightness,
Nor any foot-fall, nor any lithe girl's singing, nor any love, but the lonely
beacon for the lost plane.

May from my pain some wisdom thrive, may from her joy some movement
not slow and abject rise,

May from the vineyard-implicated hands of men on land arise some simple
statement : This is my blood, this wine ;
This bread my body. That we may know in our careless violation, each
ungentle act murders our lover,
And learn at last to take earth and man with reverence, living and dying in
grace.
May this September end no world and year but the world and year of an
ungentle, discourteous past ;
The past is ashes, let ashes bury ashes ; the future is knotted and glowing and
will be there when we arrive ;
And the present is a grave and lovely fire. I have learned this, but how shall
I teach it,
In this September of my twenty-sixth and fairest year ?

ENID BAGNOLD

DAWN

The light, in swelling up the side of the world,
Turns round the curve and falls upon the field.
The cattle stare in silence at the dawn.

Only the bird, beneath its folded wings,
Unwraps its head, stretches one leg, and sings.

Then in a crash the loaded trees let loose
The throats that tremble in a thousand leaves
Green trees that bear no buds burst into song.

And in the dumbness of the dawn's appearance
Valley filling, tree pierced, painted peak—
Beasts staring, man sleeping, the dawn itself silent—
What an invention that the birds should speak !

STEPHEN SPENDER

FAUST'S SONG

Oh, that I might be one with that moonlight
Which spreads its tiger stare across these books
Through the high barred pane where, night after night,
My endless longing meets her endless looks!

Freed from these cobwebs, dust and phials of knowledge,
Would I might in her hell of heaven flit:
Be stripped in dew and rolled through grass and hedge
And sigh in caverns of her sensual spirit.

To wake on peaks at dawn among the inhuman
Rose-towering dreams—O peacocks, fountains, sighs—
Reborn in the blonde landscape of a woman,
And dying in the river of her eyes!

ICE

She came in from the snowing air
Where icicle-hung architecture
Strung white fleece round the baroque square.
I saw her face freeze in her fur
And my lips seemed to fetch quick fire
From the firelit corner of the room
Where I had waited in my chair.
I kissed this fire against her skin
And watched its warmth make her cheeks bloom,
While at my care her smiling eyes
Shone with the health of the ice
Outside, whose brilliance they brought in.
That day, until this, I forgot.
How is it now I so remember,
Who, when she came indoors, saw not
The passion of her white December?

STEPHEN SPENDER

THE SITUATION OF THE AMERICAN WRITER

DURING eighteen months which I spent in the United States until November 1948, I used often to ask myself how the life of an American writer compared with that of an English one. The answers which I offer in this essay are not based on careful documentation or research. It is possible that I may be wrong on some points. Nevertheless they are answers given by someone deeply interested, for his own reasons, in the question, and as such, they have a certain conviction. Their interest lies a good deal in the fact of an English writer making them: they are probably—some of them—the last which would occur to an American. But this interest is authentic because it relates to an international situation, the relationship of British and American attitudes. I am not attempting to state 'The truth about the American literary life'; but 'How an English writer sees the situation of his American colleagues'.

A certain frustration accompanies attempts of British to write about Americans and of Americans to write about British. This is in itself a significant fact of the Anglo-American situation. We are each of us hyper-sensitive about our nation in relation to this particular other one. Therefore many things which a Britisher could say about Britain would cause annoyance if said by an American, and vice versa. It seems then, important to say at the outset that I am not hostile to America. In fact, I love America in the only way which to me seems real to love a country. That is to say, I regard America as a country where opposition to bad institutions, commercialization, exploitation, vulgarity, and many other obvious evils, is, after all, real within the American continent and the American system. It is possible to be an American and oppose the bad things which are American, and there is nourishment in the climate and the institutions of America for such opposition. To say this is to say very decisively that one loves America, for it is to say that there is an America to support against the badness of America, even within America as we know it today.

It is salutary to remember that there are few countries in the contemporary world to which one can pay such a compliment.

The greatness of American literature is that it derives from this living opposition of another America which is very living within the American system. One need only mention the names of the best American writers—Hemingway, Faulkner, Tate, Wilson, Robert Lowell, E. E. Cummings, Marianne Moore, Penn Warren, Blackmur, Matthiesson, Trilling, Thurber, Jean Stafford, Mary McCarthy, Eudora Welty—to take the most random choice—in order to show that the sum of contemporary American literature is a living body of protest against the vulgarity, commercialization, advertising, exploiting, which many people think of as the most characteristic American qualities. In fact, contemporary American literature suggests what the last American election suggested: that there is an America realer and more alive than the America which pollsters, advertisers, Hollywood and news editors know about.

The most striking difference between the European and the American writer is that the American does not belong to a community of literature. It is not until one has been in America for some time that one realizes the extent to which in Europe he does. In France, to be a young writer is to seek entry into a community. The symbol of this community is the Parisian café where the students and young writers meet to discuss their literary problems, admire each other's work and decide that their 'movement' is the last revolution of the word to succeed all previous literary régimes. The literary review is, like the café, a meeting place, which is also a battleground, of generations. If the older writers do not appear in the reviews, they are easily forgotten. To be a living writer is to be part of the living, discussing community of French letters.

In England, contemporary literature is not such a conscious community as in France. However, to a great extent, Oxford and Cambridge provide a literary tradition which widens later into Bloomsbury, the Twenties, the Thirties, the New Romantics, into which the life of writers who have not been educated at those universities merges, albeit sometimes rebelliously. Even a writer like D. H. Lawrence became, by way of the literary meetings with other writers at Lady Ottoline Morrell's house at Garsington, an Oxford rebel, belonging far more to this tradition than to the Nottingham coal-mines. The outstanding English literary

periodicals are meeting places of generations. The anthologies of poets show often a sense of the poets of a young generation communicating with each other to an extent which can make the reader feel an intruder. The older writers are nearly all acquainted with each other personally. Apart from the tendency of older and more successful English writers to petrify into public monuments during their lifetime, a general consciousness of shared values which can be maintained or betrayed, informs English literary life.

The young American writer is in an entirely different situation from the young French writer going to the café, the young English writer at Oxford or Cambridge or at some intellectual suburb of these. There is no café in which he will meet Hemingway, Dos Passos, Faulkner. There is no periodical in which his name will be 'accepted' among the great reputations of older writers who are known throughout the world.

If he happens to meet older writers, he will be meeting them across, as it were, an enormous gulf of grandiose success, Hollywood success, Life Magazine success, which raises writers socially out of the sphere of literature and into that of film stars or successful journalists. Or perhaps he meets them across a gulf of bitter failure within which the older writer is isolated, embittered and fortified.

The Pathology of Literary Success would make an interesting study. Its dangers are twofold: first, that it may separate the writer physically and spiritually from his most fertile material of felt experience, which may well be associated with his childhood and early strivings. Secondly, success may mean the enthusiasm of an audience who appreciate qualities which have little connexion with literature. In America, there is the third danger, that the writer's economic position rests almost entirely on by-products of his purely literary productivity, films, articles in highly paying magazines, even exploitation of his name by advertisers (recently an advertisement has appeared, in the form of a high-minded sentiment about world peace written in the hand-writing, with a Parker Pen, of Mr. Ernest Hemingway). Above all, the danger is that the publicized personality of the writer, with his four wives, his big-game-hunting, his knocking-down-of-other-writers-at-parties, tends to eclipse his ever more modest activities in his study. Nor does this machinery by which the loaded ore of writing is

transformed into expensive-seeming glossy by-products of reputation (just as the by-products of coal-tar are turned into miscellaneous articles such as aspirin tablets, artificial silk, and film for cameras) delay until the writer has attained middle age. One has only to follow the whizzing comets of Mr. Truman Capote and Mr. Gore Vidal to see how quickly and effectively this transforming, diluting, disintegrating machinery can work.

In America, the only way to escape the consequences of great success is to escape literally and physically. This is doubtless why Mr. William Faulkner is inaccessible in his Southern home, why Mr. Steinbeck is elusive, why Mr. Hemingway now lives in Cuba. Paradoxically, the publicization of contemporary American literature, contributes to the disruption of any community of letters in America. The successful writer, dazed by the irrelevances of a success which has little to do with recognition of his best qualities and which robs him of his deepest experiences, escapes somewhere (if he is sensible) hugging his precious talent. Instead of being now the boy from the Middle West with the *Hard Luck* story, he becomes the poor rich boy clinging to his aesthetic conscience. Alcoholism, the occupational disease of the successful American writer, can surely be explained at least in part as an effort to restore contact with the dionysiac, the violent, the real, the unconscious level of experience, by those who have been cut off by success from their roots.

But failure is perhaps even more disastrous than success in America. In Europe, after all, success and failure are comparative terms, particularly failure. One has the feeling that the European failure is often a kind of secret success, at any rate among a small circle. It is possible to envy Keats the position he enjoyed in Leigh Hunt's circle, or Gide his reputation when his publishers had sold only a few copies of *Paludes*, or Rilke when he commanded the attention of only a few princesses. But in America there are scarcely these public failures who are secretly private, highly superior successes. There is a lack of the sense within a civilization which is changing and expanding so rapidly, that if one misses one's time, another time will discover one. The future will be so different from the present that there could not be much consolation in such a thought anyway. Failure, therefore, like success, has something definite, final about it. It creates a gulf which separates the unsuccessful writer from America. The young

writer is confronted with a dramatic choice between success, with the kind of gigantic systematic exploitation of misunderstanding which it involves, success of one's inferior qualities through the medium of one's best ones, or failure which leads to an isolation almost as complete as success. The fact that certain writers deliberately refuse success and even choose failure, does them enormous credit. Yet they sacrifice more than reward by making this choice. For the vitality of America is so enormously absorbed into the myth of a great success story, that to reject success is to reject a great part of the experience of America. There is a bitterness of the rejecting and the rejected about American literary failures.

Probably I have oversimplified in drawing this black-and-white contrast between success and failure, and I shall qualify the picture in a moment. What is important, though, is to emphasize that the American writer is confronted by a number of choices any one of which tends in the long run to isolate him, to dramatize his position within a society where there are writers, some good, some bad, some successful, some unsuccessful, but no literary life, no considerable public sustainedly and discriminatingly interested in seeking out the best, a kind of jury of middle-class middling readers to whom the European writer after all continually addresses his appeals, restates his case, and on whose judgement he is prepared to wait for twenty years if necessary. Also I wish to show that the choice between success and failure is not a simple choice between corruption and integrity, although the writer who refuses success would maintain that it is. Failure means putting oneself outside the preoccupations of the greater part of American life and placing oneself within a perhaps embittered Greenwich Village group, or perhaps a sophisticated university one. It may mean withdrawing into a voluntary exile in some part of the country and issuing from time to time those vituperative messages against the whole of America which characterize the work of Henry Miller and his followers. Success also means isolation but it is the experience of a form of loneliness which is the lot of a great many successful Americans. The successful American writer can and sometimes does absorb into his work some of the dynamism of American materialism.

The qualifications which rather modify my picture of the writer who rejects success is that he can to some extent exploit his by-products, just as the successful one can. In many universities

today there are 'poets in residence'; e.g., Paul Engel at Iowa, Karl Shapiro at Baltimore, and other writers, besides poets, are coming more and more to seek work at colleges and universities. Another way of tiding over unsucccess is to be supported by some Trust or obtain one of the many literary awards offered by the Great Foundations, such as Rockefeller¹ and Guggenheim.

The American universities are to a large extent subsidizing American contemporary literature. In fact, one can foresee a day when American literature might be divided into two channels: the commercialized success and the subsidized commercial failure. Such a development might not be entirely bad, but it would tend to increase a division which is already apparent, of American writing, on the one hand into that which can be exploited by the Book Clubs and Hollywood transformed into something which sells to a wide public for other than literary reasons; and on the other hand into that which is highly intellectualized, critical in spirit, hermetic, self-conscious, writing by writers for writers communicating in a highly allusive idiom with each other. The popular work adapted to popular misconceptions might well sometimes prove to be a masterpiece, as might also the exclusive and literary. But between the two extremes of commercialization and academic exclusiveness the communication of literature with an effectively wide cultivated public would not exist.

The universities, like the Trusts, render a great service to the best American writers. But nevertheless a university post tends to isolate a writer within his academic surroundings, hundreds of miles away from the nearest 'poet in residence' at another university. A result of turning writers into university teachers is surely the immense and massive concentration on literary criticism which fills so large a space of the literary periodicals. Some of this criticism is excellent. Yet the enormous energy devoted to producing volume after volume of research into Henry James by now resembles one of the massive American industries. A good deal of talent which might be creative is diverted into critical channels by conditions which make critical research a 'safe' subsidized literary task, and where in universities published criticism is a good way of gaining Faculty advancement.

The choice between success and unsucccess is underlined by the

¹The Rockefeller Foundation also does much to help British writers in the present crisis. Last year it gave thirty-four young writers Atlantic Awards.

situation of American publishing. American publishers cannot make publishing pay unless they sell books almost on the scale of mass production to a public amongst whose pleasures reading does not seem to count very high. Books are therefore sold on their value as sensation, or on the exploitation of such attractive characteristics as their authors may be supposed to have, through Book Clubs, to a public which is not encouraged to develop a taste of its own. One of the things that strikes the visitor to America is the remarkable scarcity of good book shops, which are hardly to be found outside a few in the great cities. The only book shop in most towns is the drug store, where books are sold by shopkeepers who naturally stock only those which are in the widest demand. In fact, the sale of books through Book Clubs and advertising of their sensational features is conducted on the same lines, but with less selectivity, as the sale of automobiles or soap.

The very steep rise in costs since the war, together with the effects of a post-war slump in the public interest in literature, has made this situation much worse, and has exaggerated its worst features. A book, to cover costs, must now sell approximately 10,000 copies (this is a very large figure for a book which does not rank as a best-seller). It is unhealthy for publishing to get into the condition where the sale of 1,000 or 2,000 copies of a book does not at least cover costs. One result of the pressure on publishers to sell larger quantities of each book they publish is direct and indirect pressure on writers to write books which will sell in large quantities. It becomes increasingly more difficult to publish a first book, unless this achieves the orthodoxy of sex and sensation which is becoming to a best-seller. 'Editors', introduced into publishing houses, suggest to writers how they should alter their books in order to make plot and character exciting and saleable. Books are even altered and rewritten in some cases by the same 'editors'. The Hollywoodization of literature whereby books are written with a view to their being bought by the film companies now takes another form whereby publishers imitate the methods of Hollywood and show a tendency to treat manuscripts as scripts to be rewritten to supply the supposed demands of the public. It is not unthinkable that American publishing houses will one day employ professional writers who systematically shape into synthetic best-sellers the manuscripts submitted to them by a sad dying-out race of creative writers. Some editors are already in touch with

promising young writers at universities, 'discovering' them and at the same time revealing to their innocent minds that writing is one thing, and selling what one writes quite another. The teachers of 'creative writing courses' cannot altogether ignore in their teaching 'the market' and what this implies: what it implies, indeed, is that you either have to get on to it or be a teacher of a creative writing course.

The, by now, quite disastrous situation of publishing is not entirely a fatality which has happened to the publishers through no fault of their own. To some extent it is a result of what appears to be megalomaniac folly. Many publishers seem to belong to a curious race of dispirited exiles moving between Bohemia and Big Business, not quite sure in their own minds whether they are talentless artists or frustrated industrialists. In America most of them seem to have decided that the solution of their psychological problem is to model their business on mass sales by mass advertising whilst endeavouring to pervert writers to be workers producing a commodity which can be sold by such methods. It is piously hoped, of course, that profits will permit always of a little loss on prestige publishing, which is, after all, a form of advertisement. Some New York publishers keep up air conditioned offices in huge luxuriously furnished buildings which are on the scale of the offices of the most profitable capitalist enterprises. There they explain to the young writer with a promising manuscript that they cannot afford to give him an advance during the time that he is making the alterations to his book which their 'editors' so reasonably recommend. With their enormous 'overheads', sumptuous offices and luxuriously travelling 'editors' looking for 'new talent', the scale of their publishing is related to Hollywood and Big Business but not to the modest scale of contemporary literature.

A few publishers, such as James Laughlin IV of *New Directions*, resist this tide, by devoting their private means to the publication of striking new work which may not command a large public. But such businesses, although they at least are able to publish the work of a few young writers, are not able to solve the really crucial problem, which is to find an American public not so large as to swamp all taste and judgement, and not so small as to be unable to support new writers to the extent that they are able to earn a livelihood from writing.

The general effect of increasing commercialization and of the compulsion to sell ever larger and larger quantities of a few books to a public which does not really care about books, must surely be that the position of the writer who writes as well as he possibly can 'to please himself', becomes less tenable. Even if one does not altogether agree with aesthetic self-centredness, it must be admitted that the first novels of James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, Christopher Isherwood, Cyril Connolly, and many others, have been written out of such an attitude. Indeed, most writers drop themselves as their own best audience all too soon. But it seems that today the unsaleable first book (which is somehow so important a basis of literary integrity) is becoming a romantic conception, like the attic where masterpieces are painted by starving artists. The Millers, Patchens, Rexroths, and a few others who still just survive in works devoted to creating defiant gestures, are perhaps the last remnants of a race of independent writers who are being superseded by the novelist whose literary training is a training in self-commerce, by the poet who seeks a job where he may become teacher in writing poetry at a university. Here, of course, I am anticipating what has not yet happened, but it is worth doing so in order to challenge the tendency of many people to think that somehow the situation of writers remains always the same, always difficult but always overcome.

Perhaps the greatest surprise in the literary situation for the visitor to America, is to discover the lack of any large, consciously cultivated reading public, interested, almost as a matter of duty, in seeking out and supporting the best contemporary writing. I am thinking of the kind of public which, before the war, read the *Nouvelle Revue Française* in France, and which in England reads the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *New Statesman and Nation*, *Horizon* and *New Writing*. In my own mind, I reckon this reading public as being drawn from about 30,000 to 50,000 people who are interested in contemporary cultural developments. Of these, perhaps 2,000 would read a work which was recommended to them as being of high interest. This public in Britain and France supplies a reservoir of goodwill on which publishers and writers can draw to give a modicum of support to originality.

When one compares the American with the European situation, one sees that in Europe the reading public of 30,000 to 50,000 has

organs of opinion and a considerable degree of self-awareness. It has its weekly and monthly periodicals which have a personal almost family air of being by and about people who know very well one another's interests, in striking contrast to the strenuous efforts of a periodical such as *The Saturday Review of Literature* to 'sell' culture. The existence of these periodicals supported by interested readers means that publishers can get in touch easily through advertising in them with exactly that public which is most interested in experimental work.

It is difficult to believe that in America a similar public does not exist. Surely amongst all those people who go to lectures, belong to women's clubs, attend hundreds of 'creative writing' courses, there must be several thousand capable of developing independent literary tastes of their own, and a pride in supporting the best contemporary American literature. I suspect that this public has never been sought out, because the large publishers are too intent on larger quarry, whilst the editors of the small reviews do not want to break out of their exclusiveness. I remember very well an evening in New York when a young Belgian publisher and myself tried to persuade the editors of one of the best small American periodicals that it would be worth spending some of a few thousand dollars which had been given them by a patron, on sending one of their editors on a tour of the students of 'creative writing' courses to gain the support of the students who should be the most interested public of this review. We both had the impression during this conversation that the editors of this review did not want to raise their circulation above its figure of less than 10,000. Its smallness fortified them in a sense of their exclusiveness which they did not wish to lose.

The best weekly review, *The Nation*, does not have the breadth which would come from its reaching the intellectual life of a group as large as that which supports the corresponding English reviews. *Partisan Review*, which has published the most interesting stories and articles appearing in America over a number of years, suffers also from that sense of limitation which makes one feel that to read it is to belong to a special group outside the rest of America. There is, as Sartre observed in an interview on American literature published in *Combat*, a tendency towards ossification in such narrowness, and he went on to observe that many American publications did not extend beyond their region of publication. A

curious misunderstanding, I thought, reflecting on American methods of nation-wide distribution and communication, which tend to uproot regionalism and leave nothing except mere sense of locality which distinguishes, say, the Mid-West from the West and the East. Yet perhaps Sartre is right in the sense that there is a kind of transportable New York, southern and western regionalism, which travels through restricted channels to little pools of intellectual life all over the country.

After travelling in thirty States, and visiting about forty universities and colleges, I am convinced that there is a public which could support a periodical with a nation-wide circulation, larger than that of any existing periodical, but deliberately avoiding the huge circulations of the nation-wide reviews. Perhaps, though, even if there is such a public, the difficulties of distribution in order to reach it are insuperable. It would have to be reached through the news agencies and drug stores, and only the national circulations can reach them. The Either-Or of doing things on the very smallest or the very largest scale is to some extent implicit in the huge spaces, the thinly spread population and the organization arranged for the purpose of distributing mass-produced goods, of America. It occurs to me though that it might be possible to find alternative channels of distribution to the drug stores and news agencies, in clubs, universities and lecture societies.

I may well be wrong in thinking this. Two recent examples illustrate the difficulty of finding a mean between the excessively small and the excessively large circulation. Some years ago, the management of *The New Republic* decided to extend the influence of that small but excellent weekly. They discovered that in order to cover the cost of any expansion a circulation of 250,000 was required. In the unsuccessful attempt to capture this circulation, *The New Republic* became that strange mongrel which seems to have been begotten by *Time* upon the body of the *New Statesman and Nation*, which grieves its former admirers today.

A group of writers and journalists of distinction decided to produce as an experiment in co-operative publishing a monthly review called '47 (when it appeared in 1947: in 1948 the title became '48, upon which it ceased publication). Confronted by the drastic choice between very small and very large sales, they put

their affairs into the hands of a sales manager, with the result that the new experiment conducted by distinguished writers became the usual pocket magazine with pin-up girl on cover and scratchy line drawings illustrating the letterpress.

The 'little reviews' have extremely small circulations and pay contributors very inadequately (the Rockefeller Foundation has done something to better this situation by subsidizing the rates of pay given to contributors, in some instances). One might say that the combined influence of the 'little reviews' in America now fails to represent an *avant-garde* or even any vital intellectual excitement. Although new reviews appear at intervals, there is nothing which corresponds to *The Dial*, or the old *Paris-American Transition*, no place where one can imagine the first work of a Joyce, an Eliot or a Hemingway appearing and being noticed in a way which would produce a widening wave of excitement. Perhaps here, as in some other respects, the situation is not just an American one. There seems to be a failure of *avant-garde* excitement in literature after this war throughout the world. Everywhere the many new reviews and publishers which have sprung up since the war have only produced an impression of inflation and diffuseness.

If one wished to publish a poem or story in America which would meet with the attention of an American intelligentsia, one would be puzzled where to publish it. The 'little reviews' are, as I have said, 'little' to the point of complete ineffectiveness. The periodicals which maintain a high standard, and which are certainly widely distributed, such as *The Atlantic* and *Harpers* are devoted primarily to information and discussion of opinion: creative work takes second place in them. *The New Yorker*, superbly edited, is what is called a 'wonderful job': most writers who write for it are edited (or edit themselves) almost out of existence so that everything in it appears to be by an anonymous body called *The New Yorker*. In fact, the great achievement of the American periodicals is to create a kind of signed anonymous journalism, in which articles and stories, although under the names of writers, bear the stamp of the editorial system.

'Editing' often means complete rewriting, turning the authentic, the personal, the poetic, into the kind of public language of the weekly news magazines. Here is an example of an 'edited' passage, as it appeared in a magazine with a wide

circulation, of William Goyen's story '*The White Rooster*'. First, here is the original passage:

But Marcy Samuels was behind the bush, waiting, and while she waited her mind said over and over 'if he would die!' 'If he would die, by himself. How I could leap upon him, choke the life out of him.' The rooster moved towards the pansies, tail feathers drooped and frayed. If he would die, she thought, clenching her fists. If I could leap upon him and twist his old wrinkled throat and keep out the breath.

Here is the 'edited' passage, as it appeared (without consulting the writer):

She watched at the window. The way the rooster came into her pansy bed, so serene and cocky, filled her with grudging admiration; and she hated him all the more for being so indestructible, so sure in his right to plague her. In his rags of feathers he strutted as though he owned her place . . .

and so on. The reader who reads Goyen's story will see that the scene has been changed, the action telescoped, the language altered, the rhythm destroyed, in order to produce a brittle kind of language, like that of the news' stories. In fact, the result of 'editing' is that fiction comes to resemble journalism, and journalism fiction. The 'stories' in the news move in the same world of journalistic, glamourized unreality as the stories in the popular magazines. Both have been robbed of their authenticity; journalism of its directness; and fiction of its art.

The British writer who is not able to live from the sales of books but who is able to develop a secondary literary activity to support himself, has several advantages over his American colleague. He may have to work very hard, but the reviewing, broadcasting and other literary work which he may do to gain a livelihood will keep his name before the same public as reads his books. In America, the possibilities of gaining a living from reviewing of the highest standard, and from broadcasting, are far less, and the writer is forced back to a greater extent than the British writer on some kind of patronage, or on selling himself more blatantly. The system of commercially sponsored broadcasting by many private broadcasting companies has practically

excluded the great benefits which broadcasting might confer on American writers, and which they too might bring to broadcasting. In Britain programmes such as the Third Programme are an enormous help to contemporary British writers, and also writers bring to the radio talents which are worthy of a great country with a living culture. It is an unfortunate fact that all the gigantic radio networks and newspapers and cinemas in the United States are devoted night and day almost exclusively to advertising the very worst aspects of American civilization. The worst things that can be said about America cover hundreds of miles of American newspapers and films and are shouted from a hundred radio stations every day. The lack of opportunity for American writers to write for these media, without completely sacrificing their talents, does not help them and does not help America.

One or two radio programmes, such as the discussions of books on C.B.S. are exceptions to this vociferous black picture. Also some of the fashion magazines, *Vogue*, *Mademoiselle*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Town and Country*, show remarkable enterprise in encouraging the best short-story writers and even the poets. But the fashion magazine, where poems and stories are buried under hundreds of pages of advertisements for underwear, are scarcely a medium in which the writer can be said to 'appear'. He is, rather, rewardingly lost, as in a drawer crammed with artificial silks.

I am brought back then, to the fact, that what is lacking in America is a writing and a reading community, prepared to support the best in writing and reading. Certain developments, which seem puzzling to the foreigner, may indicate an instinctive movement towards such a community. One of these, is the 'creative writing' course, whose true significance may not be that university teachers can teach young writers to write, but that they can bring them together, make them discuss their work with one another, give them the sense of the background of a life of writing to which they belong. Another, is the writers' conferences, sponsored usually by the summer schools of universities. Here writers meet to discuss various problems of writing, and although few situations do more to arouse the worst emotions of writers than to meet other writers, nevertheless these meetings are unexpectedly successful, perhaps because they respond to a real need of the American writers.

The American writer is the most isolated in the world. Unless he happens to come from Boston or New York, he is isolated in his youth in the West or Mid-West or South, and this isolation amid a kind of society which does not recognize the values of the artist, may remain throughout his life as the valid basis of his work, and he may always secretly remain ashamed of being a writer and not a 'tough guy'. He is isolated by the lack of cultural centres, corresponding to Paris and London, in which he may find a spiritual home. At a certain epoch, indeed, after 1920, Paris was a far truer centre of American literary life than any city in America. He is isolated by success which exploits his literary reputation and at the same time lifts him socially and economically both out of literature and out of his early sensitive experiencing, and he is isolated by failure which may tie him down to academic and critical work, and make him wish to intellectualize his talents to a point which is dangerous to his creativeness.

Yet the greatest achievements of American writing come out of this very isolation, this original loneliness within a deeply experienced environment where literature is derided, this later isolation within a success or unsucess where it is still misunderstood. Intense loneliness gives all the great American literature something in common, the sense of a lonely animal howling in the dark, like the wolves in a story of Jack London, the White Whale chased across a waste of seas in Melville, the sensitive and exploitable young American seeking his own soul through ruined European palaces, of James. The recurrent theme of American literature is the great misunderstood primal energy of creative art, transformed into the inebriate, the feeling ox, the sensitive, the homosexual, the lost child.

When W. H. Auden explained that the reason he lives in America is because he can be alone there, he was at his most profound. The matey, the democratic country, is the natural home of homeless wanderers, incommunicable voices pouring themselves out without hope of reaching an audience, on reams of paper. In passages of *Finnegans Wake* there is a kind of reaching out of the Irish wanderer to America, and perhaps the great passionately formed yet formless masterpieces of this century, of James and Proust and Joyce, have a kinship with American literature. The loneliness of the American writer is significant because it corresponds to a very deep American experience, the kind of

experience which James touches on in his portraits of the millionaires dying side by side in the sketch of his last novel *The Ivory Tower*.

This isolation explains a perplexing feature of American writing—its emphasis on violence, brutality, decadence. Reading the novels of Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck and the other contemporary American writers, one has the impression not of a vital, progressive society but of the Russia of Dostoievsky and Chekhov. Yet one can hardly accept this as a witnessing of America. For America is vital, young, optimistic, and in this way opposed to tired and disillusioned Europe. Or one America is like this. But there is another America, which is after all very old, very attached to Europe. A conflict is implicit in American civilization which is not really a young nation growing up in virgin country, but a collection of people with roots in very old countries living the life of a young country. Thus there is a tendency always in American culture to jump from the pioneering to the over-civilized: and within this tendency also a reaction against it. There is Walt Whitman and Henry James. The scene of the drama of America and Europe which is the theme of Henry James, is America itself, Boston and New York, more than Paris and Rome.

Someone once said that America was a country which had passed from primitive pioneering to decadence with no interval of cultivated civilization in between. It would be truer to say that primitivism, decline and vital civilizing forces all exist side by side at the same time in America. American literature reflects this co-existence of extremes, this loneliness of conditions which do not understand one another, this frustration and violence.

Europe has an intellectual life where people know themselves, and know each other and are known. Formerly American writers came to Europe to enter into this state of awareness and self-awareness. But a time can come when there is a movement of Europeans away from European self-awareness towards the American loneliness. This happens if European awareness becomes terrifying, chaotic and disillusioned, rather than harmonious, and poetic. It seems that we may have reached the stage when European awareness is awareness of a purpose which has gone out of life, an illusion which is lost. French existentialism is awareness of the meaninglessness of the real condition of being human and

the arbitrariness of constructive and creative attitudes. But isolation is the only tolerable condition of work for the individual whose motives in creating and constructing are of a heroic arbitrariness. There comes a stage when a *knowing* community is one which knows that no one believes in the mission of this civilization any longer. In such conditions one may get little revivals—a sudden interest, let us say, of a group of English artists in the Pre-Raphaelites and Nineteenth-Century Gothic. But here everything descends below the level of the arbitrary gesture of public and artistic ‘engagement’ to the children’s game, the walks with the governess on the Downs.

It is better perhaps, then, to be alone. And for this reason the American loneliness has a great attraction for the European intellectual today. There has been a movement of English writers to America, and, were it not for language difficulties, one can scarcely doubt that there would be an emigration of European literary life on a considerable scale. Translations of contemporary American literature have swept the continent into a movement which is an invasion by external forces. American loneliness is now a magnet which pulls across the Atlantic as powerfully as Europe once pulled in the other direction. In America you are acquainted with everyone, but you are known by and get to know hardly anyone. There is no awareness of what you are up to, reputations, good or ill, are based on the most elementary and widely diffused misunderstandings.

So it would be wrong to condemn the American isolation of talent and to assert that it must be replaced by a literary community corresponding to the European one. At the same time, one must distinguish between two kinds of isolation for the writer, one creative and one sterile, and one must bear in mind that the existence of literature depends on a readers’ as well as a writers’ situation.

Productive loneliness perhaps expresses the American tragedy of a great continent without a centre. It is a loneliness of clarity free of the insidious intellectual connexions and commitments which now threaten to betray the individual European talent by involving it too much in the unbelief of a declining civilization.

The uncreative loneliness is a too facile acceptance of the separation of the writer’s particular situation from all others. It is the loneliness of the successful who sneer at the unsuccessful, of the unsuccessful who reject every possibility of success, of the

poets who retire early into University careers and concentrate on tremendous labours of literary criticism, of the editors and publishers who allow policy to be dictated to them by sales managers, and equally of the editors who have no wish to expand their circulation beyond a tiny clique, the loneliness of those who retire bitterly to the Mid-West or the Pacific coast, or of those who accept alcohol as their fatality and write with it and about it. This acceptance of partial situations is mechanical because it is a reflection of the segregating, specializing, commercializing tendencies of the whole of America.

The creative loneliness is, of course, the solving by individuals within their own work of the problems which society presents, so that the successful rises above the mere fortune of his success, and within conventions which the society accepts manages to create extremely vital work, as did Balzac and Dickens. There is a great vitality in America and Americans which permits of these miraculous solutions which somehow permit films which are masterpieces to be produced within the conditions imposed by Hollywood, novels which are masterpieces to be accepted by Book Clubs. Nevertheless the individual's capacity to solve the problem within his own work and life does not prevent the problem from being grave. And in America the lack of a middle-sized reading public, independent of Book Clubs and capable of choosing for itself, is the main cause of the extraordinary situation by which talent is less capable of supporting itself for what it is, and to do what it wants to do, than in most European countries. It is true that today the European writer is going through a very grave crisis, but this is largely induced by paper shortages and other difficulties of a purely material nature. The American malady is a spiritual one, the commercialization of spiritual goods on an enormous scale, in the same way as material things are commercialized. Everything which sells has to sell on advertised merits which are not its true quality, everything which is made, is made to satisfy a demand artificially stimulated by sales propaganda. In the country where culture is 'sold' enormously, it is sold as something other than culture and tends to become something else in the process. That real values nevertheless are maintained is the triumph of certain individuals who are able to enter into and survive this enormous success-machinery, and of others who reject it heroically.

WILLIAM GOYEN

THE WHITE ROOSTER

TO W. F. BERNIS

THERE were two disturbances in Mrs. Marcy Samuels' life that were worrying her nearly insane. First, it was, and had been for two years now, Grandpa Samuels, who should have long ago been dead but kept wheeling around her house in his wheel chair, alive as ever. The first year he came to live with them it was plain that he was in good health and would probably live long. But during the middle of the second year he fell thin and coughing and after that there were some weeks when Mrs. Samuels and her husband, Watson, were sure on Monday that he would die and relieve them of him before Saturday. Yet he wheeled on and on, not ever dying at all.

The second thing that was about to drive Marcy Samuels crazy was a recent disturbance that grew and grew until it became a terror. It was a stray white rooster that crowed at her window all day long and, worst of all, in the early mornings. No one knew where he came from, but there he was, ineradicable from her yard, crowing to all the other roosters far and near—and they answering back in a whole choir of crowings. His shrieking was bad enough, but then he had to outrage her further by digging in her pansy bed. Since he first appeared to harass her, Mrs. Samuels had spent most of her day chasing him out of the flowers or throwing objects at him where he was, under her window, his neck stretched and strained in a perfectly blatant crow. After a week of this, she was almost frantic, as she told her many friends on the telephone or in town or from her backyard.

It seemed that Mrs. Samuels had been cursed with problems all her life and everyone said she had the unluckiest time of it. That a woman sociable and busy as Marcy Samuels should have her father-in-law, helpless in a wheel chair, in her house to keep and take care of, was just a shame. And Watson, her husband, was no help at all, even though it was his very father who was so much trouble. He was a mouse of a little man, slow, patient, and not easily ruffled. Marcy Samuels was certain that he was not aware that her life was hard and full of trouble.

She could not stand at her stove, for instance, but what Grandpa Samuels was there, asking what was in the pot and sniffing it. She could not even have several of the women over without him riding in and out among them, weak as he was, as they chatted in confidence about this or that town happening, and making bright or nasty remarks about women and what they said, their own affairs. Marcy, as she often told Watson, her husband, simply could not stop Grandpa's mouth, could not stop his wheels, could not get him out of her way. And she was busy. If she was hurrying across a room to get some washing in the sink or to get the broom, Grandpa Samuels would make a surprise run out at her from the hall or some door and streak across in front of her, laughing fiendishly or shouting boo! and then she would leap as high as her bulbous ankles would lift her and scream, for she was a nervous woman and had so many things on her mind. All these things he did, added to the trouble it was for her to keep him, made Marcy Samuels sometimes want to kill Grandpa Samuels. He was everywhere upon her, like an evil spirit following her; and indeed there was a thing in him which scared her often, as if he was losing his mind or trying to kill her.

As for Grandpa, it was hard to tell whether he really had a wicked face or was deliberately trying to look mean, to keep Marcy troubled and to pay her back for the way she treated him. He had been wicked in his day, as men are wicked, had drunk always and in all drinking places, had gambled and had got mixed up in some scrapes. But that was because he had been young and vigorous. He had a face that, although mischievous lines were scratched upon it and gave it a kind of devilish look, showed that somewhere there was abundant untouched kindness in him. Grandpa had a way of sneaking into things Mrs. Samuels did, as a weevil slips into a bin of meal and bores around in it. He had a way of objecting to Marcy, which she sensed everywhere. He haunted her, pestered her. If she would be bending down to find a thing in her cupboard, she would suddenly sense some shadow over her and then it would be Grandpa Samuels, he would be there, touch her like a ghost in the ribs and frighten her so that she would bounce up and let out a scream. Then he would just sit and grin at her with an owlish face. It may have been that his days were dull and he wanted something to happen, or that he remembered how he heard her fight with his son, her husband, at night

in their room because Watson would not put him in an old man's home and get the house and Marcy free of him. 'You work all day and you're not here with him like I am,' she would whine. 'And you're not man enough to put him where he belongs.'

All this, and then to have a scarecrow rooster annoying you the length of the day and half the early morning was too much for Marcy Samuels. She had nuisances in her house and nuisances in her yard.

It was on a certain morning that Mrs. Samuels first looked out her kitchen window to see this gaunt rooster strutting white on the ground. It took her only a second to know that this was the rooster that crowed and scratched in her flowers and so the whole thing started. The first thing she did was to poke her blousy head out her window and puff her lips into a ring and wheeze shooooooooo! through it, fiercely. The white rooster simply did a pert leap, erected his flamboyantly combed head sharp into the air, flung it about for a moment, and then started scratching vigorously in the lush bed of pansies, his comb slapping like a girl's pigtails.

Since her hands were wet in the morning sink full of dishes, Mrs. Samuels stopped to dry them imperfectly and then hurried out the back door, continuing to dry her hands in her apron. Now she would get him, she would utterly destroy him if she could get her hands on him. She flounced out the door and down the steps and threw her great self wildly in the direction of the pansy bed, screaming shoo! shoo! away! away! and then cursed the rooster. Marcy Samuels must have been a terrible sight to any barn-yard creature, her hair like a big bush and her terrible bosom heaving and falling, her hands thrashing the air. But the white rooster was not dismayed at all. Again, he did a small quick hop, struck his beak like an antenna into the air, and stood firmly on his ground, his yellow claw spread like an octopus over the face of a purple pansy and holding it to the ground imprisoned as a cat holds down a mouse. And then a carillon-like sound, a clear melodious crow, which Mrs. Samuels thought was the most awful noise in the world, burst from his straggly throat.

He was plainly a poorly rooster, thin as a sparrow, his white feathers drooping and without lustre, his comb of abundant growth but pale and flaccid, hanging like a wrinkled glove over his eye. It was clear that he had been run from many a yard, and

that in running he had torn his feathers and so tired himself that whatever he found to eat in random places was not enough to put any meat on his carcass. He would not be a good eating chicken, thought Mrs. Samuels, running at him, for he has no meat on him at all. Anyway, he was not like a chicken but like some nightmare rooster from Hades sent to trouble her. Yet he was most vividly alive, in some courageous way.

At length she threw a stone at him and with this he leaped and screamed in fright and hurdled through the shrubbery into a vacant lot. Mrs. Samuels dashed to her violated pansy bed and began throwing up loose dirt about the stems, making reparations. This was no ordinary rooster in her mind. Since she had a very good imagination and was, actually, a little afraid of roosters anyway, the white rooster took on a shape of terror in her mind. This was because he was so inextinguishable, so indestructible. Something seemed to protect him. He seemed to dare her to capture him, and if she threw a shoe out her window at him, he was not challenged, but just let out another startling crow at her. And in the early morning in a snug bed, such a crowing is like the cry of fire! or an explosion somewhere.

It was around noon of that day that Mrs. Samuels, at her clothes-line, sighted Mrs. Doran across the hedge, at her line, her long fingers fluttering over the clothespins like butterflies trying to alight there.

'That your rooster that's been in my pansy bed and crows all the time, Mrs. Doran?' Marcy asked loudly.

'Marcy, it must be,' answered Mrs. Doran. 'You know we had two of them intending to eat them for Christmas, but they both broke out of the coop and went running away into the neighbourhood. My husband Carl just gave them up because he says he's not going to be chasing any chickens like some farmer.'

'Well then I tell you we can't have him here disturbing us. If I catch him do you want him back?'

'Heavens no, honey. If you catch him, do what you want with him, we don't want him any more. Lord knows where the other one is.' And then she unfolded from her tub a long limp outing gown and pinned it to the line by its shoulders to let it hang down like an effigy of herself.

Mrs. Samuels noticed that Mrs. Doran was as casual about the

whole affair as she was the day she brought back her crystal compote in several pieces, broken by the cat. It made her even madder with the white rooster. This simply means killing that white rooster, she told herself as she went from her line. It means wringing his neck until it is twisted clean from his breastbone—if we can catch him; and I shall try. Catch him and throw him in the chicken-yard and hold him there until Watson comes home from work and then Watson will do the wringing, not me. When she came in the back door she was already preparing herself in her mind for the killing of the white rooster, how she would catch him and then wait for Watson to wring his neck—if Watson actually could get up enough courage to do anything at all for her.

In the afternoon around two, just as she was resting, she heard a cawing and it was the rooster back again. Marcy bounded from her bed and raced to the window. 'Now I will get him,' she said severely.

Marcy Samuels did a very deft thing she thought, in order to catch the rooster, and this is the way she caught him. She moved herself quietly to a hedge-bush and concealed herself behind it, her full-blown buttocks protruding like a monstrous flower in bud. Around the hedge-bush in a smiling innocent circle were the pansies, all purple and yellow faces, bright and blowing in the wind. When he comes scratching here, she told herself, and when he gets all interested in the dirt, I shall leap upon him and catch him sure.

Behind the hedge-bush she waited; her eyes watched the white rooster moving slim and vivid towards the pansy bed, pecking here and there in the grass at whatever was there and might be eaten. As she prepared herself to leap, Mrs. Samuels noticed the white hated face of Grandpa at the window. He had rolled his wheel chair there and began to watch the manœuvres in the yard. She knew at a glance that he was opposed to her catching the white rooster. But because she hated him, she did not care what he thought. In fact she dimly suspected Grandpa and the rooster to be partners in a plot to worry her out of her mind, one in the house, the other in the yard, tantalizing her outside and inside. And if she could destroy the rooster that was a terror in the yard she had a feeling that she would be in a way destroying a part of Grandpa that was a trouble in her house. She wished she were hiding behind a bush to leap out upon *him* to wring *his* neck. He

would not die, only wheel through her house day after day, asking for this and that, meddling in everything she did.

The rooster came to the pansy bed so serene, even in rags of feathers, like a beggar-saint, sure in his head of something, something unalterable, although food was unsure, even life. He came as if he knew suffering and terror, as if he were all alone in the world of fowls, far away from his flock, alien and far away from any golden grain thrown by caring hands, stealing a wretched worm or cricket from a foreign yard. What made him so alive, what did he know? Perhaps as he thrust the horned nails of his toes in the easy earth of the flower-bed he dreamed of the fields on a May morning, the jewelled dew upon their grasses and the sun coming up like the yolk of an egg swimming in an albuminous sky. And the roseate freshness of his month when he was a tight-fleshed slender-thighed cockerel, alert on his hill and the pristine morning breaking all around him. To greet it with cascading trills of crowings, tremulous in his throat was to quiver his thin red tongue in trebles. What a joy he felt to be of the world of wordless creatures, where crowing or whirring of wings or the brush of legs together said everything, said praise, we live. To be of the grassy world where things blow and bend and rustle; of the insect world so close to it that it was known when the most insignificant louse would turn its minute course or an ant haul an imperceptible grain of sand from its tiny cave.

And to wonder at the world and to be able to articulate the fowl-wonder in the sweetest song. He knew time as the seasons know it, being of time. He was tuned to the mechanism of dusk and dawn, it may have been in his mind as simple as the dropping of a curtain to close out the light or the lifting of it to let light in upon a place. All he knew, perhaps, was that there is a going round, and first light comes ever so tinily and speck-like, as through the opening of a stalk, when it is time. Yet the thing that is light breaking on the world is morning breaking open, unfolding within him and he feels it and it makes him chime, like a clock, at his hour. And this is daybreak for him and he feels the daybreak in his throat, and tells of it, rhapsodically, not knowing a single word to say.

And once he knew the delight of wearing red-blooded wattles hanging folded from his throat and a comb climbing up his forehead all in crimson horns to rise from him as a star, pointed. To be

rooster was to have a beak hard and brittle as shell, formed just as he would have chosen a thing for fowls to pick grain or insect from their place. To be bird was to be of feathers and shuffle and preen them and to carry wings and arch and fold them, or float them on the wind, to be wafted, to be moved a space by them.

But Marcy Samuels was behind the bush, waiting, and while she waited her mind said over and over 'if he would die!' 'If he would die, by himself. How I could leap upon him, choke the life out of him.' The rooster moved toward the pansies, tail feathers drooped and frayed. If he would die, she thought, clenching her fists. If I could leap upon him and twist his old wrinkled throat and keep out the breath.

At the window, Grandpa Samuels knew something terrible was about to happen. He watched silently, fixedly. He saw the formidable figure of Mrs. Samuels crouching behind the bush, waiting to pounce upon the rooster.

In a great bounce-like movement, Mrs. Samuels suddenly fell upon the rooster, screaming 'if he would die!', and caught him. The rooster did not struggle, although he cawed out for a second and then gently gave himself up to Mrs. Samuels. She ran with him to the chicken-yard and stopped at the fence. But before throwing him over, she first tightened her strong hands around his neck and gritted her teeth, just to stop the breathing for a moment, to crush the crowing part of him, as if it were a little waxen whistle she could smash. Then she threw him over the fence. The white rooster lay over on his back, very tired and dazed, his yellow legs straight in the air, his claws clenched like fists and not moving, only trembling a little. The Samuels' own splendid golden cock approached the body to see what this was, what had come over into his domain, and thought surely he was dead. He leaped upon him and drove his fine spurs into the white rooster's limp mass of feathers just to be sure he was dead. And all the fat pampered hens stood around gazing and casual in a kind of fowlish elegance, not disturbed really, only a bit curious, while the golden cock bristled his sheeny feathers and, feeling in himself what a thing of price and intrepidity he was, posed for a second like a statue imitating some splendid ancestor cock in his memory, to comment upon this intrusion and to show himself unquestionable master, his beady eyes all crimson as glass hat-pins. It was apparent that his hens were proud of him and that in their eyes he had lost

none of his prowess by not having himself captured the rooster, instead of Mrs. Samuels. And Marcy Samuels, so relieved, stood by the fence a minute showing something of the same thing in her that the hens showed, very viciously proud. Then she brushed her hands clean of the white rooster and marched victoriously to the house.

Grandpa Samuels was waiting for her at the door, a dare in his face, and said, 'Did you get him?'

'He's in the yard waiting until Watson comes home to kill him. I mashed the breath out of the scoundrel and he may be dead the way he's lying on his back in the chicken-yard. No more crowing at my window; no more scratching in my pansy bed, I'll tell you. I've got one thing off my mind.'

'Marcy,' Grandpa said calmly and with power, 'that rooster's not dead that easily. Don't you know there's something in a rooster that won't be downed? Don't you know there's some creatures won't be dead easily?' And wheeled into the living room.

But Mrs. Samuels yelled back from the kitchen, 'All you have to do is wring their necks'.

All afternoon the big wire wheels of Grandpa Samuels' chair orbited through room and room. Sometimes Mrs. Samuels thought she would pull out her mass of wiry hair she got so nervous with the cracking of the floor under the wheels. The wheels whirled around in her head just as the crow of the rooster had burst in her brain all week. And then Grandpa's coughing. He would, in a siege of cough, dig away down in his throat for something troubling him there, and, finally, seizing it as if the cough were a little hand reaching for it, catch it and bring it up, the old man's phlegm, and spit it quivering into a can which rode around with him on the chair's foot-rest.

'This is as bad as the crowing of the white rooster,' Mrs. Samuels said to herself as she tried to rest. 'This is driving me crazy.' And just when she was dozing off, she heard a horrid gurgling sound from the front bedroom where Grandpa was. She ran there and found him blue in his face and gasping.

'I'm choking to death with a cough, get me some water, quick!' he murmured hoarsely. As she ran to the kitchen faucet, Marcy had the picture of the white rooster in her mind, lying

breathless on his back in the chicken-yard, his thin yellow legs in the air and his claws closed and drooped like a wilted flower. 'If he would die,' she thought. 'If he would strangle to death.'

When she poured the water down his throat, Marcy Samuels put her fat hand there and pressed it quite desperately as if the breath were a little bellows and she could perhaps stop it still just for a moment. Grandpa was unconscious and breathing laboriously. She heaved him out of his chair and to his bed, where he lay crumpled and exhausted. Then was when she went to the telephone and called Watson, her husband.

'Grandpa is very sick and unconscious and the stray rooster is caught and in the chicken-yard to be killed by you,' she told him. 'Hurry home, for everything is just terrible.'

When Marcy went back to Grandpa's room with her hopeful heart already giving him extreme unction, she had the shock of her life to find him not dying at all but sitting up in his bed with a face like a caged rabbit caught in a turnip patch.

'I'm all right now, Marcy, you don't have to worry about *me*. You couldn't *kill* an old crippled man like me,' he said firmly.

Marcy was absolutely spellbound and speechless, but when she looked out Grandpa's window to see the white rooster walking in the leaves, like a resurrection, she thought she would faint with astonishment. Everything was suddenly like a haunted house; there was death and then a bringing to life again all around her and she felt so superstitious that she couldn't trust anything or anybody. Just when she was sure she was going to lose her breath in a fainting spell, Watson arrived home. Marcy looked hypnotized and wild-faced. Instead of asking about Grandpa, whether he was dead, he said, 'There's no stray rooster in my chicken-yard like you said, because I just looked'. And when he looked to see Grandpa all right and perfectly conscious he was in a quandary and said they were playing a trick on a busy man.

'This place is haunted, I tell you,' Marcy said, terrorized, 'and you've got to do something for once in your life.' She took him in the back room where she laid out the horror and the strangeness of the day before him. Watson, who was always calm and a little underspoken, said, 'All right, pet, all right. There's only one thing to do. That's lay a trap. Then kill him. Leave it to me, and calm your nerves.' And then he went to Grandpa's room and sat and talked to him to find out if he was all right.

For an hour, at dusk, Watson Samuels was scrambling in a lumber pile in the garage like a possum trying to dig out. Several times Mrs. Samuels inquired through the window by signs what he was about. She also warned him, by signs, of her fruit jars stored on a shelf behind the lumber pile and to be careful. But at a certain time during the hour of building, as she was hectically frying supper, she heard a crash of glass and knew it was her Mason jars all over the ground, and cursed Watson.

When finally Mr. Samuels came in, with the air of having done something grand in the yard, they ate supper. There was the sense of having something special waiting afterwards, like a fancy dessert.

'I'll take you out in awhile and show you the good trap I built,' Watson said. 'That'll catch anything.'

Grandpa, who had been silent and eating sadly as an old man eats (always as if remembering something heart-breaking), felt sure how glad they would be if they could catch *him* in the trap.

'Goin' to kill that white rooster, son?' he asked.

'It's the only thing to do to keep from making a crazy woman of Marcy.'

'Can't you put him in the yard with the rest of the chickens when you catch him?' He asked this mercifully. 'That white rooster won't hurt anybody.'

'You've seen we can't keep him in there, Papa. Anyway, he's probably sick or got some disease.'

'His legs are scaly. I saw that,' Mrs. Samuels broke in.

'And then he'd give it to my good chickens,' said Mr. Samuels. 'Only thing for an old tramp like that is to wring his neck and throw him away for something useless and troublesome.'

When supper was eaten, Mr. and Mrs. Samuels hurried out to look at the trap. Grandpa rolled to the window and watched through the curtain. He watched how the trap lay in the moonlight, a small dark object like a box with one end open for something to run in, something seeking a thing needed, like food or a cup of gold beyond a rainbow, and hoping to find it here within this cornered space. 'It's just a box with one side kicked out,' he said to himself. 'But it is a trap and built to snare and to hold.' It looked lethal under the moon; it cast a shadow longer than itself and the open end was like a big mouth, open to swallow down. He saw his son and his son's wife how they moved about the

trap, his son making terrifying gestures to show how it would work, how the guillotine end would slide down fast when the cord was released from inside the house, and close in the white rooster, close him in and lock him there, to wait to have his neck wrung off. He was afraid, for Mrs. Samuels looked brutal and strong as a lion in the night, and how cunning his son seemed. He could not hear what they spoke, only see their gestures. But he heard when Mrs. Samuels pulled the string once, trying out the trap, and the top came sliding down with a swift clap when she let go. And then he knew how adroitly they could kill a thing and with what craftiness. He was sure he was no longer safe in this house, for after the rooster then certainly he would be trapped.

The next morning early the white rooster was there, crowing in a glittering scale. Grandpa heard Marcy screaming at him, threatening, throwing little objects through the window at him. His son Watson did not seem disturbed at all; always it was Marcy. But still the rooster crowed. Grandpa went cold and trembling in his bed. He had not slept.

It was a rainy day, ashen and cold. By eight o'clock it had settled down to a steady gray pour. Mrs. Samuels did not bother with the morning dishes. She told Grandpa to answer all phone calls and tell them she was out in town. She took her place at the window and held the cord in her hand.

Grandpa was so quiet. He rolled himself about ever so gently and tried not to cough, frozen in his throat with fear and a feeling of havoc. All through the house, in every room, there was darkness and doom, the air of horror, slaughter and utter finish. He was so full of terror he could not breathe, only gasp, and he sat leaden in his terror. He thought he heard footsteps creeping upon him to choke his life out, or a hand to release some cord that would close down a heavy door before him and lock him out of his life forever. But he would not keep his eyes off Marcy. He sat in the doorway, half obscured, and peeked at her; he watched her as a hawk.

Mrs. Samuels sat by the window in a kind of ecstatic readiness. Everywhere in her was the urge to release the cord—even before the time to let it go, she was so passionately anxious. Sometimes she thought she could not trust her wrist, her fingers, they were so ready to let go, and then she changed the cord to the other hand.

But her hands were so charged with their mission that they could have easily thrust a blade into a heart to kill it, or brought down mightily with the force of an avalanche a hammer upon a head to shatter the skull in. Her hands had well and wantonly learned slaughter from her heart, had been thoroughly taught by it, as the heart whispers to its agents—hands, tongue, eyes—to do their action in their turn.

Once Grandpa saw her body start and tighten. She was poised like a huge cat, watching. He looked, mortified, through the window. It was a bird on the ground in the slate rain. Another time, because a dog ran across the yard, Mrs. Samuels jerked herself straight and thought, something comes, it is time.

And then it seemed there was a soft ringing in Grandpa's ears, almost like a delicate little jingle of bells or of thin glasses struck, and some secret thing told him in his heart that it was time. He saw Mrs. Samuels sure and powerful as a great beast, making certain, making ready without flinching. The white rooster was coming upon the grass.

He strode upon the watered grass all dripping with the rain, a tinkling sound all about him, the rain twinkling upon his feathers, forlorn and tortured. Yet even now there was a blaze of courage about him. He was meagre and bedraggled. But he had a splendour in him. For now his glory came by being alone and lustreless in a beggar's world, and there is a time for every species to know lacklustre and loneliness where there was brightness and a flocking together, since there is a change in the way creatures must go to find their ultimate station, whether they fall old and lose blitheness, ragged and lose elegance, lonely and lose love; and since there is a shifting in the levels of understanding. But there is something in each level for all creatures, pain or wisdom or despair, and never nothing. The white rooster was coming upon the grass.

Grandpa wheeled so slowly and so smoothly towards Mrs. Samuels that she could not tell he was moving, that not one board cracked in the floor. And the white rooster moved toward the trap, closer and closer he moved. When he saw the open door leading to a dry place strewn with grain, he went straight for it, a haven suddenly thrown up before his eye, a warm dry place with grain. When he got to the threshold of the trap and lifted his yellow claw to make the final step, Grandpa Samuels was so close

to Mrs. Samuels that he could hear her passionate breath drawn in a kind of lust-panting. And when her heart must have said 'let go!' to her fingers, and they tightened spasmodically so that the veins stood turgid blue in her arm, Grandpa Samuels struck at the top of her spine where the head flares out into the neck and there is a little stalk of bone, with a hunting knife he had kept for many years. There was no sound, only the sudden sliding of the cord as it made a dip and hung loose in Marcy Samuels' limp hand. Then Grandpa heard the quick clap of the door hitting the wooden floor of the trap outside, and a faint crumpling sound as of a dress dropped to the floor when Mrs. Samuels' blousy head fell limp on her breast. Through the window Grandpa Samuels saw the white rooster leap pertly back from the trap when the door came down, a little frightened. And then he let out a peal of crowings in the rain and went away.

Grandpa sat silent for a moment and then said to Mrs. Samuels: 'You will never die any other way, Marcy Samuels, my son's wife, you are meant to be done away with like this. With a hunting knife.'

And then he wheeled wildly away through the rooms of Marcy Samuels' house, feeling a madness all within him, being liberated, running free. He howled with laughter and rumbled like a runaway carriage through room and room, sometimes coughing in paroxysms. He rolled here and there in every room, destroying everything he could reach, he threw up pots and pans in the kitchen, was in the flour and sugar like a whirlwind, overturned chairs and ripped the upholstery in the living room until the stuffing flew in the air, and covered with straw and flour, white like a demented ghost, he flayed the bedroom wallpaper in hanging shreds, coughing and howling he lashed and wrecked and razed until he thought he was bringing the very house down upon himself.

When Watson came home some minutes later to check on the success of his engine to trap the rooster and fully expecting to have to wring his neck, he saw at one look his house in such devastation that he thought a tornado had struck and demolished it inside, or that robbers had broken in. 'Marcy! Marcy!' he called.

He found why she did not call back when he discovered her by the window, cord in hand as though she had fallen asleep fishing.

'Papa! Papa!' he called.

But there was no calling back. In Grandpa's room Watson found the wheel chair with his father's dead body in it, his life stopped by some desperate struggle. There had obviously been a fierce spasm of coughing, for the big artery in his neck had burst and was still bubbling blood like a little red spring.

Then the neighbours all started coming in, having heard the uproar and gathered in the yard; and there was a dumbfoundedness in all their faces when they saw the ruins in Watson Samuels' house, and Watson Samuels standing there in the ruins unable to say a word to any of them to explain what had happened.

C. GIEDION-WELCKER

CONSTANTIN BRANCUSI

To give some outline of the personality and achievement of Constantin Brancusi, our greatest living sculptor, one must forgo for a moment any detailed examination of his art and concentrate on something deeper, on the intense spiritual radiancy of the man and his work. Before giving a direct answer to the question: who is this artist and what is the significance of his art as plastic achievement in our time, something general and fundamental should be said about the totality, the great humanity of the man and his work. Perhaps, to give the uninitiated an idea of the climate of the Brancusian world, it would be more to the point to recall an incident from the life of the Indian religious philosopher, Ramakrischna—the incident which brought about his conversion to the doctrine of absolute purity, with which, from then on, he was to illuminate the lives of men. ' . . . One day, when he was a boy of sixteen, he was walking across the fields when he looked up and saw a flight of herons passing across the sky at a great height. And this alone, the living whiteness of their beating wings against the blue sky, just the contrast of these two colours, this eternal unnameable something struck into his soul. And in that moment everything that had been united in his soul became loosed and everything that had been loosed became united so that he collapsed as if he were dead. And when he stood up again he was no longer the same man as he who had fallen down. . . '

Many people who visit Brancusi's country studio in the Impasse Ronsin and have the experience of meeting the supple, sinewy, yet gentle figure of the sculptor—for the first time among his creations of wood and marble—leave the place astonished, inspired, changed. Back in the noisy Rue Vaurigard it is as if one had been at the heart of nature itself, far away from all the bustle of the town, in an atmosphere of creative beginnings and final solutions. The extraordinarily intense impression left by Brancusi's world of forms lingers a long time, as the sound of the sea echoes on afterwards in the ear. Those who have felt its radiance retain it always, and it works on inside them.

The way of Brancusi has been hard and difficult.¹ It has led through poverty, along the stony paths of public misunderstanding, the attacks of Press and authorities. A legal action which he had to fight in the U.S.A. in 1926 recalls Joyce's fight over *Ulysees* in the same country ten years later. It is significant that all the official sculptors of America who were involved in the Brancusi case took their stand with the authorities who maintained that these bronze and marble forms were 'not art at all'. It remained for a few collectors, artists and critics to develop new aesthetic ideas in the face of the whole world and recognize what had been described as 'block matter—subject to tax' as well-carved and extraordinarily harmonious works of art. From the point of view of the battle for modern art it is interesting to examine this case in all its phases, since it establishes a precedence par excellence for official narrowmindedness, the spirit of reactionary academism and the insidious effect of out-worn aesthetic clichés. It was a question of proving that Brancusi's boldest and purest work, *L'Oiseau*,—he elaborated it later in many different variations and worked it out to its completion—was a work of art. The opposing party, the Customs Office, denied this because the principle of imitative representation had not been fulfilled and the bird had neither head, beak, nor wings, but was in fact too 'abstract'. The artists and collectors supporting Brancusi on the other hand had no objection to the lack of wings since the impression of the bird's flight had been admirably achieved, and every sign of grace, power

¹ He was born in Craiova (Rumania) on 22 February 1876. He attended the local art school where he also learnt furniture making. One of the teachers there discovered his talent and got him a scholarship to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Bucharest where he worked for four years until 1904.

and speed was present. For them it was a true work of art by virtue of its proportion, form, balance, line and not least its technical accomplishment. An Egyptian bird of 3000 B.C. was produced in evidence before the tribunal to show the marked affinity between the two. Brancusi won this fantastic case, as Joyce was to win his ten years later. A few years later an Indian Maharajah wanted to build a temple from plans by Brancusi for the disputed work, or rather for one of the later variations—a good example of the different values that can be attached to the same work of art.

Constantin Brancusi has never subscribed to any 'ism' although many attempts have been made to claim him. His classical clarity of form was recognized by practitioners of 'concrete art'; the surrealists seized on the mystery of life dormant in all his works and projected it into their own world—the world of passive unconscious outpourings. But while the surrealists opposed the reality of dreams and demonic impulses to the appearance of the outside world, Brancusi's mild, devout, unaggressive forms spring from the clear-sightedness of the wise and contemplative man, from the highest level of inner integration and spiritual discipline. His creations suggest that point where the haphazard qualities of personality disintegrate, like those of the surrealists, but with Brancusi this is done only in order to reintegrate them in a wider, universal synthesis. He gives plastic form to the 'higher consciousness', thereby imparting to all who see it that 'délivrance' which is so decisive in the religious philosophies of the East. It was no coincidence that the confessions, dreams, agonies and visions of the Tibetan philosopher-poet, the monk Milarepa (eleventh century) became Brancusi's bible. This was only a corroboration from within of his own course: that striving for the absolute (in form), that final spiritual penetration and illumination of matter. There was no question in this of looking back over the centuries for a formula, but merely of recognizing across them a common mental climate.

The Finnish architect, Alvar Aalto, summed up Brancusi's art when he described it as the point of intersection between Western and Eastern culture. (The same is true of the painting of Kandinsky and Paul Klee.) For Brancusi's sculpture unites the radiant formal beauty of the Mediterranean with the formal wisdom and symbolism of the East. An intensely sensuous grasp of life as a whole and at the same time a glowing spiritual content in each individual form.

Brancusi has always remained an 'individualist,' withdrawn from the restless activity of the Parisian world of art. And yet he experienced all the decisive cultural events of his time and knew all the pioneers of the *avant-garde*: Henri Rousseau, Amadeo Modigliani, Marcel Duchamp, Eric Satie, James Joyce and many others. Living in the middle of Paris, visited by official and unofficial representatives of every country, his style of living has remained basically that of a Rumanian peasant. The food and drink, which he himself prepares for his friends—his hospitality is positively Homeric—are at the same time simple and elegant. The interior of his house, his everyday possessions, his working tools, from the oven he uses for baking to the oil press and home-made gramophone with special acoustic effects, all derive from the same essential simplicity with which his art is filled.

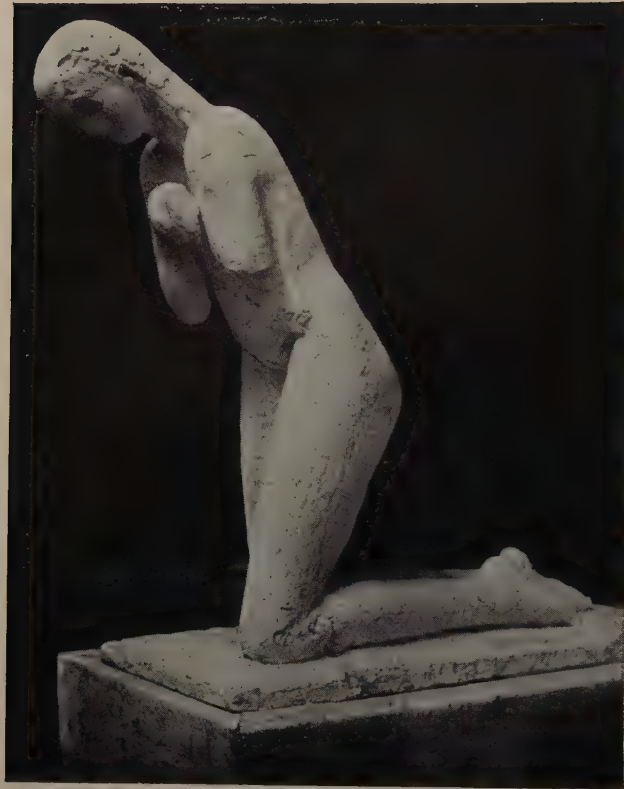
Characteristic examples of his work¹ from every decade between 1906 to 1943 (he has done nothing new in the last five years) are collected in his studio. In assessing it it is possible to detect as his main line of development a firmer and firmer rejection of detail, a stronger and stronger drive towards simplification of form. 'Simplicity', he says, 'is not an end in itself, but an approach to the essence of life, the true significance of things.' For him there lies a solid core of simplicity inside every complexity. If one looks at the early head of the 'Muse endormie' (1908-10), sinking back relaxed in tranquillity, her eyes shadowed with twilight, or the poised equilibrium of those constantly repeated elliptical forms and archetypes which are his animals of land, sea and air, or again at the many variants of his female portraits, of the 'Princess X' or 'Mlle Pogany' with the eternal refrain of the humble, meditative curve of their necks, it is possible to trace the course of a development in one distinct theme. Everywhere he is striving for a freer and more decisive plastic expression of a complex organic structure, stripping it right down to its simplest and most universal myth. A sort of plastic sign language becomes increasingly discernible, identical to that which is so eloquent in the human mandoline shapes of the early Greek Cyclades civilization, and which here, illuminated by the spirit of our time and executed with its most-finished

¹ There is a great deal of it in public galleries and private collections in America, and now also in the Musée National d'Art Moderne (Paris), where the 'Phoque' (1943) has a whole room to itself and other important works of Brancusi are on view.



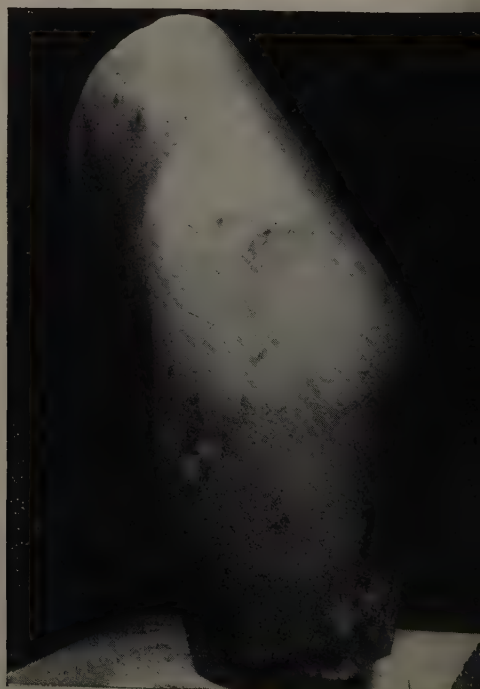
BRANCUSI'S STUDIO
with l'Oiseau, Le Phoque, Leda,
Le Poisson, Quatre Colonnes sans Fin

All photographs here shown are by Brancusi except for l'Oiseau



LA PRIÈRE (1907)
Plaster

TORSE (1909)
Marble

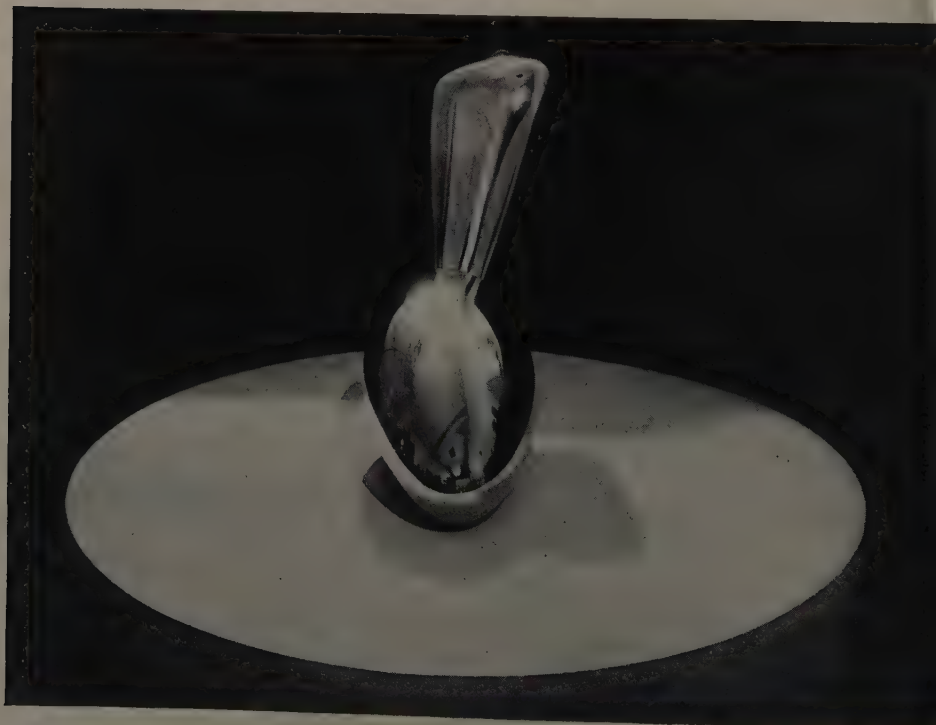




LE MIRACLE (1936) Marble



LA MUSE ENDORMIE (1908-10) Marble



LEDA (1922-24) Polished Bronze

L'OISEAU (1940)
Polished Bronze





EVE (1921) Wood

LA TORTUE (1943) Wood



craftsmanship, is called to new life. And that brings us to the simultaneous past and contemporary quality of Brancusi's work, to his deep natural consciousness of the past and at the same time his bold and prophetic drive towards the future. His carving takes place on that narrow plane where organic growth and architectural construction become one.

Rodin and his generation had raised sculpture out of a sterile classicism and sickly sentimentality, and filled it, in works which had a decisive influence, with a new spiritual expression. He was not always unliterary, but it was his great historical role to achieve bold and dramatic physical rhythms, and to penetrate and illuminate the basic plastic substance.

Brancusi first appeared in Paris in 1904—a little later than Apollinaire, Joyce and Picasso—after a weary emigration by stages westwards from Rumania. (This also took him to Zürich where he looked in vain for work as a builder and sculptor from one of the guilds.) Rodin was at that time already recognized as a master, while Maillol, at the age of forty, had turned from painting to sculpture. Maillol was a direct opponent of Rodin's impressionism. His aim was the sound architectural co-ordination of large-scale mass structure. It is significant that today Brancusi, true to his spiritual orientation, feels himself drawn much closer to Rodin's emotional impetus than to the classical physical well-being of Maillol. It was Rodin who soon discovered the touch of genius in the young sculptor and tried to get him into his studio. But Brancusi's instinct was sound and he rejected the chance, preferring to develop freely and independently in poverty. 'Sous les grandes arbres rien ne peut plus pousser,' he argued. In spite of his firm rejection of Maillol's earth-bound materialism, Brancusi's first works were based on a definite clarification of form. His early 'La prière' (1907),¹ designed for a tombstone in Rumania, and 'La sagesse' (1908) are examples of this trend. However, the intensity of the *inner gesture*, of the *spiritual* grasp of plastic expression are already perceptible in its gentle forward inclination,

¹ There is a certain affinity here, in spiritual content, with W. Lehmbruck's 'Man kneeling down' (1911) and, in form, with Archipenko's 'Salome' (1909). Brancusi's synthesis between great clarity of form and intense spiritual values in these early works is remarkable. His firmness in emphasizing large proportions is to be compared with the early sculptures and drawings of A. Modigliani, who was a friend of his. Both emphasize the movement of stretching the neck.

motivated from within. The fact that this tombstone, being a naked female figure, had difficulty in reaching its destination (an angel would, of course, have been preferable) provides yet another interesting chapter in the history of official bad taste in our time. From this early kneeling figure to the 'Torse en marbre' (1909) or the 'Torse de jeune homme' (1925) in polished bronze, and beyond, one can trace Brancusi's progress from the strict representation of a complete figure to the great expressive *Form-Torso*, an apparent fragment that nevertheless proves itself a fundamental and self-sufficient symbol of form. It was the 'Torse de jeune homme' which appeared in the Zürich exhibition of 1929 and was likened by the academicians to stove-pipes stuck inside each other.

At the Academy of Bucharest Brancusi won first prize for an exact plastic representation of a muscular figure, called 'an anatomic study' (1900-2), which can still be seen in a local medical institute there. What it means to arrive at such sculptural concentration as the two mentioned above after a minute and exhaustive examination of the realm of the organic can only be realized if one appreciates the knowledge of detail and the literally microscopic examination made by this artist into all forms and phenomena of nature. Within a free and loose conception of form, individual form becomes less and less dominant and the spirit of the universal more and more perceptible. For Brancusi, man's role in the great round of material and spiritual events is continually dwindling, and there is a further and further withdrawal from all that is vain and personal. To find a mere decorative elegance in a world of plastic form so fully elaborated and so spiritually radiant as Brancusi's—as has been done from time to time—is to misinterpret through laziness the fundamental intention and achievement of the artist.

Brancusi has for the most part given a soul to the creations of nature—dumb in a purely rational intellectual sense—and chosen them as the bearer of his message of beauty, peace and liberation. His carvings are like miracles of nature. Never a trace of imitation, always only great development of great form or movement, the fundamental rhythm of the whole.

They stand out in space like great inspired forms of some reawakened golden age. One feels that these clear-cut sculptural symbols bear no imprint of any external taste but that through

years of infiltration of every tiny individual organic form this final universal form has slowly emerged. The whole process by which the vast marble block is worked on directly, not as one might suppose, in enormous blows of the hammer, but in light relaxed taps, is in accordance with this. 'Direct carving is the only true road to sculpture, but also the most dangerous for those who don't know how to travel it' (Brancusi). He himself produces everything from start to finish without the help of assistants or models, directly from the material. And it is this method which gives his work its depth of spiritual content, its radiancy, and at the same time its very high degree of technical cleanness. In a century hard-pressed for time Brancusi has plenty of it. He will work patiently at something for years, later using different material to express the same fundamental form in the new medium. So that the inspired interpretation of nature which pours from these pieces of sculpture after he has (in the fullest sense of the word) completed them comes not least from this constant mutual assimilation of master and material. It is to this that the substance owes its fundamental mysterious beauty, to this that the form owes its fundamental expressive power. Paul Klee sees the home of the artist as being in the area of that mysterious region 'where the law of evolution is nurtured, in the lap of creation', and this is particularly applicable to Brancusi. And when Brancusi says that 'it is death to lose touch with childhood', he is referring to that eternal new-awakening, that grasp of and living participation in the thousand-fold wonders of life. That grey-white 'marble fish' of his (1918-28)—which also has variations in bronze—with its flowing ramifying veins is *the* universal form of an entire category of life. It is the fish of all fishes. The swiftly rising bronze and marble birds (1917-43) whose tension and feeling for space increase with the years, whose proportions seem to stretch to eternity, have the effect of some clearly rising sculptural song.¹ 'Oiseau, projet devant être agrandi pour remplir la voûte du ciel,' was what Brancusi called it.² The same mood is noticeable in his 'Cock, greeting the sun', in which the ascending scale of the sound

¹ Brancusi's feeling for music evolved at an early age when he learnt and mastered the Gregorian chant. At sixteen, he had built a Stradivarius, intuitively grasping the principles of its construction.

² This poetic title was corrected later in the catalogue for the Luxemburg exhibition (Paris) into 'Oiseau dans l'espace'.

of its crowing seems to merge with the scaling form of its comb. That it is Brancusi's concern to achieve an essential gesture of life, a motivation from within, is also evident in 'Leda' (1924), where the figure is throwing herself back, her head already transformed into a beak. (Brancusi wilfully alters mythology to achieve his own metamorphosis!) Or the same thing can be seen again in the stone 'Miracle' (1936), later reworked as 'Phoque' (1943), where neck and body swoop up as one, as if indeed revealing a miracle.

In accordance with the different medium, Brancusi's work in wood is possessed and motivated by a different spirit. Here it is no longer a case of balanced radiant beauty, but of a ramifying fantasy of form, disappearing and reappearing, an almost legendary enchantment. Here, too, Brancusi applies the axe directly to the wood. He carves creatures reminiscent of the gargoyles on medieval cathedrals: his 'Chimera' (1918), that queer beak-like object with the round and oval orifices, the 'Sorcière' (1914-23) with her wooden whirling and stopping, 'Socrates', half wooden idol half loud-speaker, that group which he called 'Enfant Prodigue' (1914) and which has about it something of the architectural sharpness of early Cubist work.¹ Heavy head weights and daring equilibrium dominate in these worlds, where wit and the legendary mingle. And not least one feels there the presence of the tree itself, the woods, the peasant's cottage and the national popular myth of his homeland.

Brancusi's most beautiful work, however, which he originally produced in wood in many different variations, is that abstract tree of heaven to which he gave eternally repetitive proportions and thereby an improbable floating sort of equilibrium, through that it needs to be only lightly sunk in the earth to preserve its stability, contrary to all the calculations of the engineers who thought they knew better. Brancusi also completed a variation of this in gilded molten steel for a park in Bucharest (1936). Here it rises up out of the landscape towards the clouds like one of Milarepa's prayers.

'. . . Son regard tourné vers les hauteurs
Est un adieu au monde des créatures,
Son vol vers l'immensité de l'espace
Est l'arrivée au pays de la délivrance . . .'

¹ Compare J. Lipchitz's early plastic work, 1915-16 for example.

Here there is the same great upwards sweep of 'L'Oiseau'. And then his last work, in wood and marble, like a sinking back to earth after a flight at heaven, the 'Tortue' (1943) carved out of pear wood. A sweeping wave, pure form and yet creature, the oval body and stretching necks of which seem to be loosing themselves from the earth, while the marble counterpart stretches out more sharply and exactly with almost architectural precision.

Although these very sensitively proportioned and all highly imaginatively balanced pieces of sculpture are compact masses they are never heavy, not only for their high polish, but because they have an inner movement and an inner lightness of their own. A world of great striking forms in stone, bronze and wood is called into being, monumental syntheses built of the most basic elements of sculpture. They were not originally intended for the catacombs of the museums any more than for the limited utilitarian rooms of a private house, but for the wide open spaces of nature, side by side with reflecting stretches of water, touched by the wind, bathed in sunlight. They belong to the great kingdom of the elements where forces have free play. (Brancusi has placed them on turn-tables in his studio so that one can experience their full plastic power in motion.) He also planned for them an appropriate piece of architecture as a spiritual focusing point. A 'Temple de la Délivrance', on a square cross-shaped ground plan, of which he has executed fragments, was to join painting and sculpture together in one unity of spirit. Accompanying frescoes of birds in flight, a rhythm of beating white wings against a blue background, were to be reflected in a stretch of water laid out in the centre, while vertical pieces of sculpture of birds soaring upwards were to stand in threes on the cross-pieces. Here would be a kingdom of pure meditation, cut off from the outside world, dedicated to contemplation and exaltation. This, in the widest sense of the word, architecturally *religious* concept is far removed from that functional modern architecture that we see all about us, and approaches to the pure self-contained cell-like houses of southern countries.

For the same reason the sculpture of Brancusi is in a certain opposition to all constructivist sculpture, as practised with genius by Pevsner, Gabo and Moholy-Nagy for instance. These are all artists who start from a specifically modern idea of the world in

plastic form, consciously executing their work in a specifically modern medium. On the other hand it is, in general, the dis-individualization of artistic expression that is discernible, a liberation from the personal element in order to unfold in a wider spiritual sphere.¹ But here it is not that inspired sense of eternal *nature* that dominates, as with Brancusi, but the idea of a sophisticated synthesis, at least in its highest poetic sublimation, and in full harmony with the technical progressive thought of the moment. Brancusi's sculpture is as far removed from all special contemporary feeling, from all reflection of actuality, as it is independent of all trends and movements conditioned by time or personal circumstances as it is with Picasso, for instance. He sees in this the distortion of our age and himself wishes to emerge from shattered chaos to the great simplicity and sublimity of true life. As a result of this attitude we find: development, transformation, increasing purity and the conversion of a few basic organic forms to symbols of the immanent cores of life. Novelty and 'modernity' mean for him the superior clarity by which he achieves a sweeping universality out of what is complex and divided, and thus with final technical craftsmanship the illumination and sublimation of the mass. A glance at the walls of his studio with its numerous instruments and gadgets ranged neatly side by side, most of them made by himself, emphasizes the extraordinarily conscientious side of his working method.

Although Brancusi will leave no pupils behind him, he has nevertheless by his example given many young artists an inspiration and a lead. The integrity of his personality and his uncompromising devotion to work have convinced many, who were previously not prepared to listen, of the existence of a new sculptural language. For the creator of this lifetime of sculptural achievement of a lifetime has been equipped with special powers. He has done full justice to his material, given a free and fluent beauty to his form, and a universality of spiritual content to the whole.

¹ 'Il y a un but dans toutes les choses. Pour y arriver, il faut se dégager de soi-même.'
(Brancusi)

N. K. BRANCH

WHERE SHALL JOHN GO?

XVIII—CYPRUS

DEAR JOHN,

You ask me what Cyprus is like today. It would be best, perhaps, if I began with my first impressions because they relate to the island as a place for a holiday and later tell you how Cyprus struck me, after living there for a year, as a possible home.

Since travel by sea was difficult, we went by air and this is still the best way to go without inconvenience or long delay. The B.O.A.C. fares now cost £66 (£118 return) which includes food and accommodation for a night in Rome. The B.E.A. day service is quicker and you cross France, Corsica, Italy, spend two hours in Athens airport, then follow the curve of the Dodecanese to Nicosia. We landed there in the evening—a noisy, hangdog town, full of one-way streets—and drove straight to Kyrenia which is a Mecca for the island's tourists.

We spent the next day goggle-fishing and trying to find somewhere peaceful to live. This was summertime and I wrote in my diary: 'The Taurus Mountains are fifty miles to the North, and, behind the town, the Kyrenia range rises three thousand feet—covered with pines, vineyards and marked with the many villages on its slopes. The town is on a steep hill which descends to a perfect horse-shoe harbour. This is surrounded on two sides by karob stores, old Turkish houses, coffee-shops, each with its sunshade of vines; on the third side, stands a medieval fortress. Men mended nets and one was making a float, a little osier raft with sheep bells on it. An octopus was stretched to dry on a bamboo frame. I tested the new arrow-gun ('Champion de Marseilles') and found that it was better than any other of its type. There were several schools of Spanish bream in the deep, clear water. A turtle came close to stare and flapped away. A shoal of grey mullett shot past me, frightened by the enormous keel of a caique going to its anchorage'

In the afternoon, we wandered through the olive groves, the orchards of pomegranate, tangerine and pomelo. The evening

smelt of fig trees, mint and khebab grilling on charcoal fires. The muezzin mounted his minaret. Tree frogs woke and cicadas went to sleep. Fishermen were busy in the harbour with pressure lamps and tridents—some with dynamite.

The next day, we found that it was possible to stay in a monastery outside Kyrenia. The rent was nominal and we were content to do nothing for weeks except eat some of the fish that we shot and barter the rest—a bottle of Gordon's gin for two kilos of red mullet, a pound of ham and a Camembert cheese for a small tunny. The dilapidated monastery, tenanted by an Orthodox priest and his family, is still quiet with the memories of its Byzantine, ideorhythmic peace. World without angst, amen.

But, about two months later, the fish disappeared from that neighbourhood, exhausted by the arrow-gun and the local dynamiters. We decided that it was time to explore the island and immediately the business of money began again—hotels, food, transport.

We started with Kyrenia. This is dominated by two immense buildings; the Lusignan castle of Jean d'Ibelin, Count of Jaffa and Askalon and the Dome Hotel of Mr. Katsellis. These men are fair examples of the past and the present of Cyprus and they are well represented by their counterparts in all the towns. When Mr. Katsellis is not busy adding yet another wing to his masterpiece, or serving behind his American Bar, you will find him supervising rowdy, internal alterations. Workmen hump granite through the foyer and drop bidets with a crash in the corridors. There are no lifts, no bells in the bedrooms and a chronic shortage of hot water. Yet, the Dome, packed with tourists, looks over a hyaline sea and there are four square meals a day. In a short while, the newcomer is persuaded to enjoy the thing as a large-scale family lark at twenty-two and six a day, all in. A few other hotels are also officially rated first class and a notice in the *Cyprus Mail* catches the mood of the poshest, winter sport establishment on Mount Troodos. 'Come to Us,' it says, 'Away from the Jazz and Motorcars of Nicosia! Rush to the quietude of the rich ventilation amongst streams and bushes. Swings for Little Children. Hot and Cold Porter in each room.'

The meagre night-life of Cyprus and, to some extent, the yearnings of its café society are nicely expressed by another notice in the same journal. 'At last Nicosia is Europeanized by the

Advent of Marvellous Duo Caoutchouc! Don't Miss Ben Ali—that Dangerous Jongleur of Cairo. Don't Trust Him at the Chantclair! The Hungarian hostesses charge five shillings a dance and fifteen for drinking a glass of lemonade.

There is plenty to drink on the island. The best of the local wines costs six shillings a bottle. They are better than the Clos Mariut of Egypt and worse than Syrian Ksara. The Commandaria has degenerated into a sickly porto since the Hospitalers first made it famous in their commanderies. The best draught wine is to be found in the Paphian villages. A barrel of Monastro works out at about three shillings a bottle and, like the other brandies, has an uncanny bouquet. The ouzo is terrible. Very soon there will be a shortage of the wines which were imported from Europe and the liqueurs which came from Palestine.

Cyprus has no particular native dish and no attempt is made (with rare exceptions) to alter a stale and greasy tradition. There is no inkling left of the Renaissance menu—the roast mouflon and truffles, the bustards cooked in wine, stuffed with green almonds, the pickled beccaficos—of all the good things which the island has known and which are still at hand. There is no native memory of that anointed ancestor, a king of Amathus who cooled himself with doves at dinner, using a Tyrian hair oil which drove the birds mad: but, before they could settle on his head, attendants warded them off. Boccaccio dedicated some of his works to such a king, when Cyprus was a centre of chivalry and letters and the toffs went beagling with their leopards. There is no shortage of food, with the exception of beef. Prices are lower than they are in England which, compared with the cost of drink here, makes them seem disproportionately high.

Travel is tedious or expensive. A minimum taxi fare costs three shillings and a day of motoring at least six pounds. You can, however, use a cheaper jitney service on certain routes. Bicycling on the hilly roads is exhausting and travels with a donkey are only for those who welcome a cortège of lusty yokels. There are very few inns in the country and if you ask for food at a coffee-shop, you will probably get a slice of bread, some sheep cheese, which tastes as if it has been trubenized, and a jack-knife. The peasants are unaccustomed to tourists. They will draw up their chairs, nearer and nearer to stare. They are friendly but their curiosity is overpowering.

Travel by bus is cheap. I went from Larnaca to Paphos in a bus. It was a nightmare ride in a switchback labyrinth of mountains. People, jammed together, yelled at each other as if separated by a great distance. Two pigs screamed in a sack under my wooden seat. Women sniffed oranges and yet were persistently sick. The driver spoke English with an American accent and steered with his wrists. He kept throwing mail bags at small villages. He shouted that he had recently come back to his family after 'cleaning up a lotta jack' in a Brooklyn beauty salon. His name was Mike P. Michalelides and he ran over an eagle as we roared around a hairpin bend. This idiotic bird was clutching the carcass of a lamb, too gorged even to sidestep. Mike thought nothing of it and went on to tell me about his tribe in the States and the innumerable Cypriot-American families who colonize New York with their restaurants and laundries. Men like Mike cross and recross the Atlantic at will. They are well planted in both the sterling and the dollar areas. Such families are a powerful nexus between Cyprus and the West and they combine with the Greek Orthodox Church against the bruits of Communism. Long before the Elder Pliny described the copper mines at Xero, they were coveted by conquerors. Now they are the centre of Communist agitation and the workmen are in constant and sometimes bloody revolt against their American employers and the local police. This conflict and its sympathetic explosions of unrest, gave much concern to the Colonial Authorities in 1948 when they made repeated efforts to fashion a new and acceptable constitution for the island. Perhaps the present Governor will be more fortunate in this respect than his patient predecessor, Lord Winster.

Not only the fish suffered from dynamite last year; a lot of things went bump in the night—echoes of a political addiction in the Eastern Mediterranean. A few months ago, certain trade unions made an astonishing threat to the Press of the island: unless each newspaper paid all its profits of a day into the strike funds of the Xero miners, publication would cease forthwith. The gag fell flat but it was an interesting symptom of a frame of mind in a region where two of the biggest publishing houses have been dynamited within a year—the Palestine Post and the offices of S.O.P., Cairo. But the strike situation in Cyprus seems to be better for the time being.

The journey to Paphos was typical of many disenchantments

in the island as a whole. It is disappointing that there should be so much in Cyprus and yet so little ambience. You will catch a glimpse, for an instant, of the South of France, Crete, of Damascus, Sark and Mount Olympus—but nowhere will you find the magic of the Isles d’Hyerès, the spell of the Nahr Ibrahim. In that nearby valley, the Lebanese still call red anemones the ‘wounds of Naaman’ and honour the death of Adonis each year when the river stains the sea crimson. At Paphos, one of the greatest and most fascinating shrines of the ancient world, nothing is left but a few dejected pillars, the remains of a picnic, a bottle of Keo wine labelled ‘Aphrodite’. The only exceptions are the Palace of Vouni and Richard’s inspired castle at Kolossi. The British Government, in its seventy odd years of rule, has made Cyprus the cleanest and healthiest island in the Mediterranean. It has even banished mosquitos, but the people remain stagnant. The last aphrodisiac frolics on the moonlit beaches of the Karpaz ceased long ago, and today the bucks from the loneliest villages are discarding their panache for motorbikes with two exhausts.

Nevertheless, the Cypriots are admirable because they are honest, tolerant and genuinely hospitable, and because the multiple nutcrackers of their history have failed to split their minds between East and West. They have probably been invaded and exploited more than the people of any other island. It is not surprising that you cannot enter their private world—a trauma from the impact of too many civilizations. Only one Cypriot seems to have emerged from this daydream, Zeno, who founded the school of Stoics and then committed suicide.

After a few drinks, the Cypriots become exuberant friends, invite you to parties for weeks ahead and forget all about it the next day. Few of them can play a musical instrument. Their dancing is clumsy and their singing hoarse. They are fine craftsmen, but none are artists. They will travel miles to see a third-rate troupe from Greece play ‘Oedipus’ and a record of an Athenian song heard in a café fills them with a desire for *Enosis* with a motherland that was never theirs. Logic is not their strong point and the implications of civil war makes them shudder and turn the record over. But the melody lingers on, amplified daily by Nationalists and Communists alike for different but obvious reasons.

I have used the word ‘Cypriots’ to mean those whose first language is a dialect of Greek and who form a large majority of

the population. There are other minorities: the Turks, with their courteous, melancholy charm and a character which is more easily understood by the Western European: the Armenians, affable and comparatively sophisticated: Maronites, White Russians, a village of negroes and a co-operative of Jews.

It is likely, therefore, that you would have to rely on the British community for company. Many British families have retired to Cyprus, bringing with them a faint aura of the hill station, Gezireh and the Bombay Yacht Club. They are older editions of the efficient and agreeable servants of the colony. They are interested, with a few notable exceptions, in bridge and tennis, weaving and water colours, Gilbert and Sullivan.

Cyprus used to be a sterling castle from which one could conveniently visit all the countries and the islands of the Mediterranean, but now the only easy sortie for the resident is to England. Soon after the restrictions on foreign travel, there was a great increase in the flights of visitors from London. More recently, there has been a desperate migration of those who hoped to discover in Cyprus another Côte d'Azur. At first they were enchanted. They bought villas, drank champagne and dressed in a manner which astonished everyone. But now they trail rope behind their last pair of espadrilles in this sunny cul-de-sac.

It remains to be seen what new influx there will be now that Cyprus has become the last British outpost in the Eastern Mediterranean. The military garrison and the transit facilities have been slightly increased since the evacuation of the British from Palestine and of most of the Jews from their Cypriot camps. There are still about ten thousand of the latter in the shadow of Othello's Tower. A year ago, small advance parties of Americans began to arrive with their jeeps, families, and some of the paraphernalia of political warfare. As a result, the price of land has gone up enormously in many districts. But I should say that rents on the whole are still far cheaper than they are in England and if you choose to live out of the towns, they are extraordinarily low. You can hire a small, semi-furnished villa for £25 to £50 a year. But to build such a house would now cost perhaps £2,500 or more because the price of labour has spiralled in the last few years. This factor, and the unreliability of the Cypriot labourer, makes it extremely difficult for a 'foreigner' to run a farm of any type at a profit, despite the low tax on all forms of income. Few of the villages

have electricity and this aggravates the present acute shortage of kerosene. Petrol and sometimes water are strictly rationed.

The Handbook of Cyprus (Sir Ronald Storrs) and *Historic Cyprus* (Rupert Gunnis) will be your best guides. If you come here, you should certainly meet the fabulous Mr. Mogubgub of the Famagusta department of Antiquities. You should meet as well Mr. Dikaïos, a world authority on prehistory and curator of the Nicosia Museum. Perhaps if you revisit this museum after staying for a while on the island, you will agree with me that the Cypriot has genius. Long before the acquisition of a Minoan script, he was outstaring the world with his habitual expression of a dark lion by Rousseau le Douanier. The eye of Horus, the mascara of Astarte, the scrutiny of the ikon and the boredom of the Turk, the British smile and the totalitarian moustache—all have been outstared by these people whose peculiar and disturbing art is survival.

I am sure you would enjoy a holiday in Cyprus but unless you have a definite job to do (there are none here) or the courage of a hermit, you would soon want to escape from this 'womb without a view'.

EDWARD GLOVER FREUD OR JUNG¹

V.—APPLIED JUNGIAN PSYCHOLOGY

It is in accordance with the traditions of political and religious liberty that no man should suffer restriction of his freedom of thought and speech because of his professional activities. To be sure, the clergyman is generally expected to set his own particular flock a good example by practising whatever behaviouristic precepts he may happen to preach. But this unwritten law is rarely regarded as unconscionable. The position of the psychologist in this matter is both uneasy and uncertain, a state of affairs for which he is himself partly responsible. Being in the habit of laying down the law on questions of motive, conscience and behaviour, he cannot expect to be exempt from comment on the

¹This is the last instalment of Dr. Glover's long essay on Freud and Jung. It will shortly be published in book form with two long intermediary sections (on Jung's general theory of mind, dreams and neuroses, etc.) to which this forms the conclusion. Jungians are asked to withhold replies until they are in a position to deal with the whole book.

oft times banality of his everyday judgements or the fallibility of his conduct of practical affairs. It is only natural, for example, that parents who have smarted under professional criticism of their ways of bringing up their children should exhibit some curiosity as to the outcome of the psychologist's efforts to bring up his own offspring, and a certain malicious satisfaction at his not infrequent failure.

As a matter of public interest, this issue is capable of simple solution. It turns on the nature of the psycho-therapeutic methods (if any) advocated by the psychologist. Whoever ventures to teach or guide his patient has, whether he knows it or not, usurped the privileges of the minister of religion. He has laid claim to a personal infallibility which in the case of the clergyman is justified only by the belief that he is God's instrument. Attempts on the part of the psycho-therapeutic persuasionist to escape this responsibility by maintaining that he is concerned only with encouraging 'better' adaptations avail him little, for they imply that he knows better than his patient what is 'good' for him and ultimately that he is conversant with absolute norms of function.

All of which is preamble to the statement that whereas the workaday psycho-therapist who is concerned with the alleviation or cure of mental disorders is entitled outside working hours to be as stupid as anyone else, this privilege cannot be accorded those who not only seek to direct their patients' lives but preach a quasi-theological brand of psychological conduct. In such instances the public is entitled to exhibit some curiosity as to the social, political and religious views of the psycho-therapist. When, as in the case of Jung, we are expressly informed that mental disorders are the result of a failure to perform a life-task, that the main problem of life is one of 'individuation', and that this state can be achieved with the help of Jungian ministrations, we are surely entitled to examine his public and professional utterances for some indication of its ultimate form, or at least for some signposts to the way we should follow. If this should appear an unjustifiable procedure, it can only be said in extenuation that Jung has in any case invited scrutiny of his *Weltanschauung*. 'Higher Consciousness', he tells us, 'determines *Weltanschauung*. All consciousness of motives and intentions is germinating *Weltanschauung*. . . . He whose sun still revolves around the earth is a different person from him whose earth is the satellite of the sun.' Let us therefore sample the Jungian *Weltanschauung*.

SOCIOLOGY, POLITICS AND ALCHEMY. It is appropriate, as well as convenient, to consider Jung's sociological views in conjunction with his political opinions. Sociology can be defined as the pure science of group psychology; politics the applied science of group relations. Both, however, are intimately bound up with the psychology of the individual. Indeed, to those observers who regard the so-called 'group mind' as a specialized department of the individual psyche, the phenomena of group psychology can be understood only if they are interpreted in terms of individual development. Freud, for example, regarded group psychology as being older than individual psychology: from the primal group or horde sprang the first individual, the primal father: the overthrow of the horde system and the relative composition of sexual rivalry through the medium of the family, gave an enormous impetus to the development of individual psychology. But the mechanisms of the group continued to display their primitive origin and content which can be conveniently studied, not only in the organization of primitive and civilized groups, but in the stages of development passed through by every infant on his road from infancy to that period of weaning from the family which begins at puberty.

Those who reject these hypotheses, holding that sociological phenomena are *sui generis* and based on special group instincts, are still bound to admit that the relation between politics and individual psychology is extremely close. For although politics are concerned very largely with the practical ordering of group relations, yet at every point in the social system the relation of 'individual expansion' to 'group order' raises the most acute political feeling. For this reason alone it would be justifiable to regard political systems as a form of applied group sociology, the principles of which have, however, been refracted through a medium of individual prejudice, bias or, in the rarest of instances, objective research. This goes far to explain why the average sociologist is a poor politician. The more politically minded he is the more he is at the mercy of emotional prejudice and consequently the more his views correspond with those of the man in the street. Sociological progress would, in fact, be infinitely more rapid if both laboratory and armchair sociologists were to illustrate their theoretical views with an account of their own political orientations and opinions. All of which leads to the conclusion that the

best way of estimating the value of Jung's group psychology is to correlate it with such political opinions and prognostications as he has had the temerity to divulge.

To understand Jung's sociological values it is necessary however to interpolate here a brief reference to those parallels to the Jungian process of individuation which he finds in medieval Hermetic philosophy or alchemy, as well as in the various forms of Yoga. To alchemy he was apparently drawn by the similarity of the image patterns, dreams and visions supposedly produced by the Collective Unconscious on the one hand and alchemic symbolism on the other. In his view medieval chemical experimentations were symbolic in nature; 'psychic processes expressed in pseudo-chemical language'. Trying to explain the nature of matter, the alchemist 'projected the unconscious into the darkness of matter, to illuminate it'. The *meditatio* of the alchemist is identical with the 'inner dialogue' by means of which alone man can come to terms with the Jungian Collective Unconscious. Similarly the alchemic philosophers had anticipated 'the problem of opposites as Analytical Psychology conceives it'. In their search for the philosophers' stone which would transmute the baser substances into gold, they projected into matter 'the mystery of psychic transformation' which leads to and at the same time is derived from the discovery of the transcendent Self. The divine demon, the God-man, the pneuma which enter (are projected) into matter 'stand for an unconscious component of the personality to which one might attribute a higher form of consciousness as well as a *superiority to common humanity*' (reviewer's italics).

At a first glance all this may appear to have little to do with sociology. If Jung should regard alchemy as 'a halting step towards the most modern psychology' and find in its spontaneous syncretized projections confirmation of the universal validity of the Jungian system, that, it may be argued, is his own funeral. Obviously, if the Jungian system can be deduced from the mental tendencies and systems of the alchemist, alchemical tendencies and systems are just as likely to be found in the Jungian system; witness, for example, Jung's view that 'a perception of the significance of fourness . . . means illumination of the "inner region" . . . a first step, a necessary station on the road of individual development'. The flaw in the Jungian correlation is due to the fact that,

having rejected the Freudian unconscious system, Jung has deprived himself of the concept of unconscious *defence mechanisms* whose function it is not only to restrain primitive instinctual forces but to *conceal the workings of the unconscious mind*. The Collective Unconscious which Jung offers us in place of the Freudian unconscious contains no defence mechanisms. Its expressions must always be regarded as 'positive' manifestations. The Jungian archetype is always a positive, unmodified expression of an inherited collective tendency. The unconscious symbol of Freud, it is true, allows a marginal expression of unconscious forces; but it functions also as an effective *disguise* of (defence against) unconscious content. Even if we assume that alchemy is a primitive form of unconscious psychology, we have no reason to suppose that the psychological system it represents is a valid one: on the contrary, it is safe to assume that it conceals unconscious psychic function much more than it expresses it. Jung's attempt to tie up his psychology with earlier alchemical forms of thought was a disastrous blunder: it inevitably laid the Jungian system open to the criticism that *it conceals the true nature of mind much more than it illuminates it*. And this, as we have seen, is an extremely charitable estimate of its validity.

But to return to sociology: the most significant of Jung's correlations between his own psychological system and the system of alchemical philosophy lies in the idea of *redemption*. In his view the 'secret' sought after by the alchemist by which base metal could be transmuted into noble substance, represents the need to transform the personality 'through the mixing of and forming of noble and base constituents, of the undifferentiated and inferior function, of the conscious and the (collective) unconscious'. In fact, the Jungian processes of individuation and transformation. Here Jung begins to propound an (alchemical) sociology. The modern projection of the alchemical problem of the opposites is, he says, represented by collectivity and the individual; or, society and personality. 'For it seems as if the building up of collective life and the unprecedented massing together of man, so characteristic of our time, were needed to make the individual aware of the fact that he was being strangled in the meshes of the organized mob.' The First World War, Jung maintains, arose because European man was possessed by something that robbed him of free choice. Change of this state 'can

begin only with individuals, since masses—as we know only too well—are blind beasts’.

At this point the disillusioned sociologist who has made a study of the various forms of *Führer-prinzip* will no doubt begin to smell a rat. For if the redemption of the individual involves, as Jung says it does, his isolation from the masses, it will not be long before we find that true Jungian individuation not only implies the possession of God-like or Christ-like qualities, but sets its owner above the law. The term ‘individual’, it may be surmised, will turn out to be synonymous with ‘leader’. Now it will be remembered that spontaneous individuation is, according to Jung, to be found only amongst our rarer spirits. And although at one or two points he qualifies this statement by saying that vocation, which as we have seen is equivalent to inner destiny, ‘also belongs to the small ones all the way down to the duodecimo format’, he qualifies this qualification by adding that on the way down it becomes more veiled and unconscious, till it finally merges into one with society, surrendering its own wholeness to social convention and conventional necessity. Indeed, as Jung himself remarks, many are called but few are chosen. ‘Only the few’, he goes on, ‘have hit upon this strange adventure (of developing personality).’ They are as a rule ‘the legendary heroes of mankind’. They are likewise liberated from convention. Their vocation ‘acts like a law of God from which there is no escape’. ‘*They must obey their own law.*’ ‘They thrust themselves up like mountain peaks out of the mass that clings to its collective fears, connexions, laws and methods, and chose their own way.’ The inner voice of these personalities, however, brings to consciousness whatever the whole nation or humanity suffers from. ‘But it presents this evil in individual form . . . in a temptingly convincing way . . . if we do not succumb to it in part then nothing of this evil goes into us, and then also no renewal and no healing can take place.’ If the ‘I’ completely succumbs to the inner voice, its contents act as if they were so many devils. But if the ‘I’ succumbs only in part and saves itself by self-assertion from being swallowed, ‘it is seen that the evil is only an evil semblance’. The road to leadership, it would seem, is beset with inner dangers.

Apparently emboldened by his own formulations, Jung marches with confidence on to the thin ice of political generalization and prognostication. First of all, he expresses his democratic faith:

'As a Swiss I am an inveterate democrat, yet I recognize that nature is aristocratic, and, what is more, esoteric.'¹ Having so shriven himself, he then goes on: 'the great liberating deeds of world history have come from leading personalities and never from the inert mass that is secondary at all times and needs the demagogue if it is to move at all'. 'The pæan of the Italian nation', he adds, 'is addressed to the personality of the Duce, and the dirges of other nations lament the absence of great leaders.' Lest we should be in doubt as to the nature of great leaders, Jung adds a footnote which should be quoted in full. It runs: 'This chapter was originally given as a lecture entitled *Die Stimme des Innern* at the Kulturbund, Vienna, in November 1932. Since then Germany too has found its leader'.

That this footnote was more than an impersonal comment is borne out by a number of circumstances. When criticized by Dr. G. Bally for becoming editor of the Nazified *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*, Jung maintained that by taking this step he had exposed himself to misunderstanding 'which no one can escape who, out of a higher necessity, has to come to terms with the powers that be in Germany'.² 'The sciences, the art of healing and every other art . . . must learn to adapt themselves. To protest is ridiculous!'

In 1936, developing his 'psycho-political analysis' in terms of the aristocratic tendency in nature, Jung states specifically 'Communistic or Socialistic democracy is an upheaval of the unfit against attempts at order'. And again: 'The S.S. men are being transformed into a caste of knights ruling sixty million natives'. 'There are two types of dictators, the chieftain type and the Medicine-man type. Hitler is the latter. He is the mouthpiece of the gods of old . . . the Sybil . . . the Delphic oracle.' Early in 1939 he advises the Western statesmen 'not to touch Germany in her present mood. She is much too dangerous. . . . Let her go into Russia. There is plenty of land there—one-sixth of the surface of the earth.'³ And again, in his essay on Wotan: 'The worshippers of Wotan, in spite of their eccentricity and crankiness, seemed to have judged the empirical facts more correctly than the worshippers of reason'. Referring to events in Germany during 1936, he

¹ Compare Hitler in *Mein Kampf*: ' . . . the parliamentary principle of the majority sins against the basic aristocratic principle in nature'.

² *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 13 March 1934.

³ *Cosmopolitan* interview, January 1939.

maintains that although Wotan has shown himself as 'restless, violent and stormy', his 'ecstatic and prophetic qualities' will become manifest 'in the course of the next years or decades'; 'National Socialism would not be the last word'; its destiny would be one 'which perhaps none but the seer, the prophet, the Führer himself can foretell . . .' 'The true leader is always led (by his unconscious). We can see it at work in him. He himself (Hitler) has referred to his Voice.'

Needless to say, these indications of Jung's political orientation and sagacity are embedded in a mass of generalizations from which the contrary impression might appear that his concern had always been with the daemonic (reactionary) aspects of any group expression of that Collective Unconscious without which, we had been told in the same breath, no progress can be made in any direction. After the event, Jung was as wise as any other political pundit who has perpetrated a howler. He had apparently known what was going to happen all the time; had deduced it in fact as early as 1918, when, analysing German patients, he had observed '*specifically* German archetypes' the emergence of which spelled disaster. The 'blond beast', he had said then, was stirring and apocalyptic events were afoot. After the defeat of Germany in 1945 the picture of Hitler underwent a remarkable transformation. The hermaphroditic figure of the 'religious' medicine-man *cum* Sybil, the 'demi-deity' presented to us in 1936 had given place to that of a 'psychic scarecrow (with a broomstick for his outstretched arm)', a hysteric, suffering from *pseudologia phantastica*, a psychopath leading his millions to a mass-psychosis, which incidentally was no longer, as once in Jung's eyes, a manifestation peculiar to the U.S.S.R. Germany had been and still was psychically ill, although, to be sure, the illness was one prevalent throughout Europe. 'The psychologist cannot make a distinction between the mentality of the Nazis and of the regime's opponents.' The great archetype, Wotan, had, it would seem, left the German like a 'drunkard awakening with a hangover'.

Under ordinary circumstances it would be only decent to allow the political *gaffes* of professional psychologists to sink into oblivion. This is in any case a privilege demanded by and often accorded practising politicians. Had Jung's political views been purely personal we could well dismiss them with the comment that by the grace of God and the rapid passage of military events,

he was just saved from covering himself with everlasting ridicule. As we have seen, however, Jung's claims to foresight and his doctrine of individuation deprive him of this privilege. What is perhaps more important, it would appear that this particular brand of thinking passes as scientific amongst members of the educated public who ought by now to know better. Mr. Kingsley Martin, who, though no doubt a mild authoritarian *in posse*, could not by the wildest stretch of the imagination be called a pro-Nazi, tells us¹ that although he is far yet from grasping or being able to appraise Jung's theory of the human mind, he finds Jung 'the most exciting and encouraging of living writers'. Apparently oblivious to the fact that if you accept the Jungian theory of the Collective Unconscious and with it, of course, the Jungian theory of individuation, you have committed yourself to some form of *Führer-prinzip*, he welcomes Jung's explanations of mass reactions, regarding them, indeed, as having 'a moral not only for Germany'. This being the case we may fairly proceed to examine the scientific status of the new Jungian sociology.

The reader will no doubt recall that the Jungian Collective Unconscious, which, operating somehow with an undifferentiated *élan vital* (the Jungian libido) is responsible ultimately for both Good and Evil, for the reactionary daemonic in as well as the God-like Vocation of Man, represents a legacy of inherited tendencies dating, according to taste, from the first emergence of the unicellular organism, from the dawn of primitive culture or from the post-Reformation period. And he may have surmised that, if this be the case, the influence of the Collective Unconscious must be remarkably selective as well as remarkably unselective. So he will not be altogether surprised to note that Jung not only subscribes to an aristocratic theory of nature but has cultivated a special brand of racial theory. Let us again consult 'Wotan', an essay published by Jung in the same month of 1936 in which Hitler reoccupied the Rhineland. Why, Jung asks, should Wotan, the old God of storm and frenzy, awake in a civilized country, giving rise to the *Jugendbewegung*, to the marching unemployed hordes of the Weimar republic; why, when 'the Hitler movement brought the whole of Germany to its feet' should he produce 'the spectacle of a great migration of people marking time'. Jung answers his question with an explanation of

¹ *New Statesman*, 11 September 1948.

the nature of National Socialism: 'Wotan the wanderer was awake'. In other words, the *furor teutonicus*. 'Wotan represents a primeval Germanic factor and . . . is the most accurate expression and inimitable personification of a basic human quality which is particularly characteristic of the German . . .'; a God has 'taken possession' of the Germans and their house is filled with 'a mighty wind'. 'Could we', Jung asks elsewhere¹ 'conceive of anyone but a German writing *Faust* or *Also Sprach Zarathustra*? Both play upon something that reverberates in the German soul—a 'primordial image . . . the figure of a physician or teacher of mankind'. Already in 1927² he had maintained that 'Wotan and not the God of the Christians is the God of the Germans'. If there be any doubt as to the nature of this side of Jung's racial theory, consider his comment on Hitler's 'religion'.³ 'Like Mohammedanism, it teaches the virtue of the sword . . . Hitler's first idea is to make his people powerful because the spirit of the Aryan German deserves to be supported by might, muscle and steel.'

But this was by no means Jung's first essay in the theory of racial characteristics and superiorities. Already in 1914 Freud had commented on Jung's 'racial prejudices'. These appeared to be focused in the first instance on psychological theories; witness Jung's statement that 'it could be an unpardonable mistake to accept the conclusions of a Jewish psychology as generally valid'. The racial angle was even more pointed in Jung's editorial Foreword to the first number of the Nazified⁴ *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie*, where he laid down that the new policy of the Journal would be to differentiate between Germanic and Jewish psychologies: ' . . . the definite distinctions between Germanic and Jewish psychology long apparent to sensible people shall no longer be obscured'. In the second number Jung continues: ' . . . the *Aryan unconscious* (writer's italics), however, contains buoyancy, creative germs of a future yet to be realized, which one cannot depreciate as romance of the nursery, without

¹ *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*.

² *Der Leuchter*, 1927.

³ *Cosmopolitan* interview, 'Diagnosing the Dictators', January 1939.

⁴ This contained also a pronouncement by Professor Dr. jur. Dr. med. M.H. Goering that members of the German Medical Association for Psychotherapy are expected 'to have made a serious scientific study of Adolf Hitler's fundamental book *Mein Kampf* and to recognize it as a basic work'.

becoming mentally endangered'. And again, 'The Aryan unconscious has a higher potentiality than the Jewish'. Medical psychology, he goes on, has committed the grave error of applying Jewish categories blindly to Christian Germans and Slavs. 'My warning voice was suspected of anti-semitism for decades. This suspicion originated with Freud. He had no knowledge of the Germanic soul—just as little as all his German parrots. Has the amazing phenomenon of National Socialism at which the whole world looks with astounded eyes taught them better?' The force that gave rise to National Socialism 'lay hidden in the Germanic soul, in that deep ground which is anything but the garbage-pail of unfulfillable childhood wishes . . .'; and yet again, 'I put the Jewish question on the table of the house. I have done this deliberately . . . the Jewish problem is a complex, a festering wound . . .'

To judge the 'scientific' nature of these racial theories, we must read them in conjunction with his theory of 'Earth Conditioning of the Psyche'.¹ Jung regarded the settlement of the North American continent by a predominantly Germanic population as 'the greatest experiment' in race-transplantation. In the second generation a 'Yankee type' is formed 'so similar to the Indian type' that one would have immediately attributed it to miscegenation, had one not known that there was only an infinitesimal mixture of Indian blood in the North American. The mysterious Indianizing of the American population only became clear to Jung when he treated analytically a great number of Americans. The next thing that struck him was the great influence of the Negro—'psychological influence, of course'. The lively temperament of the American at baseball games 'can hardly be derived from the Germanic forbears; it is rather to be likened to the "chattering" of the Negro village'. And so to the conclusion: 'Thus, the American presents to us a strange picture: a European with Negro mannerisms and an Indian soul'. In the air and soil of a country there is 'an α and a γ which slowly permeate man and mould him to the type of the aboriginal inhabitant . . .'. 'I remember particularly seeing in New York a family of German immigrants. Three of the children had been born in Germany and four in America. The first three were clearly Germans, whilst the others were unmistakably Americans.' So apparently the

¹ *Der Leuchter*, 1927.

Collective Unconscious is not after all the final determinant of human character and behaviour. The α and γ of air and soil, it would seem, can do more in a couple of generations than the Collective Unconscious can do in a million years. But not, singularly enough, to Jews. Generations of residence in Switzerland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Americas and the Antipodes leave their archetypes severely unaltered. No moulding to the aboriginal type takes place. Indeed when Jews produce psychologies they are, of their archetypal and projective nature, purely Jewish. The German, it is to be presumed, despite his climatic pliability, still clings to the archetypal Wotan wherever he is born. Yet the psychologist is warned not to make a distinction between the mentality of the Nazis, a Wotan-determined characteristic, and the mentality of their opponents. Further comment is needless.

RELIGION. But if Jung's sociology and politics, despite their manifest shoddiness and shallowness, secure some degree of acceptance amongst intellectuals, it is not surprising to find that, his modest demurs notwithstanding, Jung is often hailed as a great religious teacher. To be sure, the otherwise enthusiastic Priestley is cautious enough to qualify his encomiums by saying that Jung comes 'near' to religion. As will be seen, by this cautious use of the preposition, any variety of heretical belief can be described as 'religious'. But however cautious lay devotees to Jung may be, much less discretion is exhibited by accredited Jungian practitioners. Dr. G. Adler claims that the religious outlook 'regained' by Jung is 'a fundamentally new step in human consciousness'. Jacobi goes even further, stating categorically that 'Jung leads the patient to an experience of God in his own breast', and that even unbelievers 'will be led through the experience of the "inward God" in themselves to Him'. Small wonder that even such an acute and dexterous theologian as Dean Inge, though ready to admit that Jung is not a 'convinced believer', should nevertheless charge Freud with producing a 'psychology without a psyche' and maintain that 'his rival Jung is wiser, since he sees clearly that religious faith is a cure in many neurotic cases.'¹

The reader seeking for evidence of Jung's 'religious' or 'near religious' outlook will be well advised to take with him some

¹In an 'Introduction' to *The Dangers of Being Human*, by Edward Glover.

etymological definitions of 'religion' and of 'numinosity'; and he may reasonably accept the standard derivation according to which religion is a belief in and reverence for the Gods, and the numinous means divine will, power and majesty. Jung's own definition runs: religion is 'a careful and scrupulous observation of . . . the *Numinosum*, that is, a dynamic existence or effect not caused by an arbitrary act of will'. To this is added by Jung and his followers a variety of supplementary definitions. Thus, the religious process is simply the process of individuation: it is a ritualistic process performed for the purpose of producing at will the effect of the *numinosum*, a belief in an objective divine cause always preceding: it is the attitude of a consciousness which has been altered by experience of the *numinosum*.

Jung's list of the objects of religion includes besides Gods, spirits, etc., a number of abstractions 'laws, ideas, ideals' . . . anything worthy of adoration or love. 'The human soul seems to harbour mysteries, since to an empiricist all religion boils down to a peculiar condition of the mind' . . . 'One could even define *religious experience* as that kind of experience which is *characterized by the highest appreciation* (writer's italics) no matter what the contents are. Modern mentality . . . will turn to the soul as a last hope.' This hope, however, appears to be beyond consciousness: we 'must admit that the unconscious is at times capable of assuming an intelligence and purposiveness superior to actual conscious insight'. There is little doubt, says Jung, that this fact is a 'basic religious phenomenon'. 'The non-ego has all the quality of "eternity" or of relative timelessness.' The unconscious, we may remember, is also, according to Jung, 'an almost immortal human being'. A psychic process or activity, that is to say, infinite, near eternal and almost unchangeable.

Clearly then we must seek for the Jungian God in the first place in the Jungian Collective Unconscious. The difficulty is to establish which of the various derivatives or parts of the Collective Unconscious qualifies for apotheosis. Sometimes it appears to be the Collective Unconscious as a whole; but this view is offset by another according to which one of the focal points or 'personalities' of the impersonal unconscious, the Shadow, can function as the Devil. Presumably then God must exist in some other part. This is no difficulty to Jung, who regards the Christian Trinity as being a mutilated Quaternity from which the Devil has

been arbitrarily shorn. And the Quaternity, it should be explained, is nothing more than the alchemical formula of the Jungian Collective Unconscious. Even the Jungian mandala, the symbolic figure of individuation, has acquired a religious connotation: it signifies either 'the hitherto dormant divine being, now extracted and revived'; or it symbolizes 'the vessel or room in which the transformation of man into a divine being takes place'. Lastly, the *élan vital* (Jungian Libido) falls under suspicion. 'We might be tempted by modern philosophy to call energy or the *élan vital* God.' But this is apparently not practical psychology. 'Whether energy is God or God is energy, concerns one very little . . . but to give appropriate psychological explanation—this I must be able to do.'

On the whole two main tendencies appear to emerge from this multiplicity of definitions: one, that the *idea* of God is a Collective archetype, the other that religion is an *experience* of the individuated Self which, it may be remembered, combines both unconscious and conscious attitudes to life. A third possibility exists, namely, that God and the Self combine in an archetype. Dr. Adler, for example, states: 'The archetype of the Deity in the human psyche, Jung has termed the "Self"'. 'The experience of the non-ego', says Adler in this connexion, 'is perceived as "God"'. It is important to note, however, that *the archetypal image of the Deity is not meant to prove the existence of God*, only the existence of the archetype 'which', says Jung, 'to my mind is the most we can say psychologically about God'. The Ego is 'subordinated to, or contained in, a superordinated Self as a centre of the Total, Illimitable and Indefinable psychic personality'. 'All that psychology can legitimately do is to . . . accept the possibility that "God within us" corresponds to a transcendental reality.' The 'God without' must apparently shift for himself. Expressing some of these notions in terms of the psycho-therapy of the neuroses Jung remarks 'If a psycho-neurosis must be understood as the suffering of a human being who has not discovered what life means for him, then the discovery of the eternal images of meaning and significance as most intensely expressed in the experience of the "Self" as the Archetype of the Deity, indeed means a cure'. Accused of 'casting out devils by Beelzebub, an honest neurosis by the cheat of a religious belief,' Jung replies 'there is no question of *belief*, but of *experience* which is absolute. *Is there any better truth about ultimate things than the*

one that helps you to live?' (Writer's italics.) To the Jungian pantheon of endopsychic Gods are hereby added environmental experience and such specific therapeutic agents as alcohol, tea and aspirin.

Remembering the official Christian definition of God as a 'spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable', we may well inquire at this point as to the theological status of the Jungian soul and spirit of man, the *anima*(-us-i). The answer is that for purposes of religious discussion, it loses its earlier structural and functional connotations and becomes a vague caption which the casual reader might well take to mean the spirit of God. 'We moderns' must rediscover 'the life of the spirit' and 'experience it anew for ourselves'. There is a 'world of the spirit whose active principle is . . . "God"'. This spirit, incidentally, 'to ensure its own existence, must often deny and overcome an obtrusive, physical fact'. Past ages, Jung observes, held the individual soul to be dependent upon a World System of the Spirit, viz., God. 'Certainly a near eternal (sic) being may appropriately (sic) be called divine.' So, after all, the *anima* appears to be identical either with the 'near-eternal' Collective Unconscious or with the total psyche, ego-consciousness excluded. Yet even ego-consciousness is included in the Jungian total psyche. So the *anima* in its religious sense may mean anything, everything or nothing. This is remote indeed from Jung's clinical definitions of the 'soul' as either the personality, or 'a definitely demarcated function-complex', or again man's unconscious attitude to the Collective Unconscious, or a focal personality of the unconscious, or a set of archetypes or the contra-sexual. As has been emphasized to the point of tedium, Jung has little or no regard for the meaning of meaning. Like the idea of God, a definition is for him a functional utility of man, to be used 'appropriately'. Since all psychic processes, whether transcendental or instinctual in origin, are according to Jung, energy in motion, no contradiction exists for him between a 'function-complex' and the 'idea of God'. Indeed, despite his assertion that it is immaterial to man whether God is energy or energy God, one is left with the impression that Jung believes the true God to be *élan vital*. In this respect he differs only in the choice of 'archetype' from the worshippers of Priapus.

We are now in a position to outline the Jungian theology. In the beginning was the psychic fact. Ideas are facts. An idea occurring in an individual is subjective but, according to Jung,

becomes objective when it is established by a society—a *consensus gentium*. In any case, certain ideas 'create themselves almost everywhere'. They exist in the Collective Unconscious, exercise autonomous power and can apparently interfere with the life of man like an autonomous being. Psychic happenings constitute our only immediate experience. Some are derived from material environment, others seem to come from a mental source. 'Whether I picture to myself the car I wish to buy or try to imagine the state in which the soul of my dead father now is . . . both happenings are psychic reality.' This reality can, however, be transformed and falsified by the psyche. The psyche is an 'incomprehensible something'. Even our instincts 'are continually colliding with something and why should not this something be called spirit?'

Whether this something be spirit, or an archetype of the Deity or a transcendental self that has accepted the psychic facts of the Collective Unconscious, experience of it is numinous and potentially dangerous. It may be experienced as a feeling or as a voice or observed as a mandala and, provided its dangers are overcome, can give rise to religious ecstasy. Our naïve ancestors projected their unconscious contents, good or bad, light or dark, into matter: by so doing they sought at the same time to avoid the dangers of unconscious 'experience' and to find 'the meaning of life' in the external world. This, thinks Jung, is no longer necessary or indeed quite possible. The alchemical number '4', for example, now proves to be 'an archetype of extraordinary significance for the psyche'. It gives the pure spirit its 'bodiliness'. 'We have, at last, to admit that the tetrakys is something psychical . . . An idea of God, utterly absent from the mind of modern man, returns in a form used consciously 300–400 years ago.' The dangers of 'immediate experience', which appear to be reminiscent of the dangers of seeing Jehovah face to face, can be neutralized by ritual. Indeed the function of 'so-called religion', i.e., Dogma or Ritual, is to protect against 'further immediate experience'. In this respect Catholics are better off than Protestants. 'I support the hypothesis of the practising Catholic *while it works for him*' (writer's italics) as a defence against grave risk (of immediate experience presumably) without asking 'the academic question whether the defence is more or less true'. Yet, according to Jung, Dogmas began life as a 'revealed' immediate experience. In brief Christian dogmas are or were archetypal.

As regards the meaning of life, Jung continues to wobble. At one time it was the process of individuation; but in its theological aspect it becomes the 'vast psychic background whose nature . . . (the ego) . . . may apprehend, but which it has in no sense created'. This is now seen to contain 'the real meaning of existence' . . . 'It explains the stupendous nature of all visions of God.' And it explains the dangers of immediate experience; the unguarded ego may be overcome by these visions and retreat into a psychosis. In short, we are left with the impression that the Jungian *idea* of God is a *two-way system* manifested, in reversible order, in the Total Psyche, in the Collective Unconscious, in certain Archetypes including the number 4, in the Anima (but not, of course, the Shadow), in Numinous Experience, in the Self, originally but not latterly in Dogma, in any form of Appreciation, in anything that Helps Us To Live, and in the *Élan Vital*.

It would serve no useful purpose to examine this system in detail. It is perhaps sufficient to say that it is founded on a false premise regarding the nature of psychic reality. Jung is never tired of emphasizing that a psychic event is an event; but he does not care to add that a true notion differs from a false notion though both exist as psychic facts. If we had stuck to the *consensus gentium* as a proof of objective reality, we would still believe that the earth is flat. Even Jung admits that the archetypal nature of the 'craving for God' does not guarantee its factual truth. To him this is no matter: it is archetypal. We are to be made happy in this respect by sucking our thumbs. Over and over again it is made perfectly clear that *the archetypal Idea of God has nothing to do with the absolute existence of God*. In any case the absolute existence or non-existence of God is not, according to Jung, the psychologist's business. Having excluded God, and thereby *presumably* the supernatural in general, from the consideration of the psychologist, he proceeds to invest *human* ideas and images with an atmosphere politely described as mysticism, but which the less polite observer would call an atmosphere of religiosity. Jung cannot or will not see that however primary and archetypal the God-idea may be, it is *in itself* no more supernatural than the idea of a saucepan. Talk of the God within means nothing if the idea of the God without is not objectively true. Jung cannot perhaps be expected to determine whether it is objectively true or not. But at any rate his fundamental evasion

of the issue cuts the ground from under his pretensions to be a spiritual guide. If it is not the psychologist's business to investigate the objective truth of the existence of God, neither is it his business to build up a pseudo-religion out of primordial religious yearning and a multitude of myths. It is no reward to seekers after the 'meaning of life' to be invited to fill their bellies with the East wind, and like it. They might just as reasonably be asked to worship *sal volatile*.

Finally it is to be noted that the Jungian theological system is intended not only for the use of patients, but also for the generality of mankind. Being a master of evasion he gives few direct hints as to the nature of his own religious beliefs or of that 'religious outlook' he is said to have 'regained' for humanity. And following his assumption that the actual existence of God is not the psychologist's business, he might well maintain that the nature of his own religious beliefs is nobody's business. This argument has already been rejected. Whoever seeks to instruct his patients in mythological parallels and pre-religious superstitions, is under obligation to disclose his own convictions. Occasionally, however, Jung is indiscreet enough to give the interested reader a clue. He sometimes calls himself a Protestant, a position which would give him more play for his many inventions, numina and the like; it appears that the Protestant, being less protected by Dogma than the modern Catholic, and totally unprotected by the system of Catholic Confession, is more open to the numinous and potentially dangerous experience of the stupendous vision of the *idea* of God. At other times, however, Jung is seemingly a mere agnostic believing 'what he thinks he knows'.

Further evidence can only be inferred from Jung's various pronouncements. For example, he will never admit that a God is a *different thing* from an object of admiration. In fact there is no evidence that he believes either that there is a God or that there is a future life. The existence of the *idea* of God is an 'interesting' psychological fact; numinous experience, which appears to be little more than a narcissistic enjoyment of the religious sentiment, is also an 'interesting' psychic phenomenon. These ideas and interests are, however, like Guinness, good for us. And we are recommended to feel and behave as if there were an actual God and a future life. How we should accomplish this feat and what exactly we should feel is nowhere indicated. Whether his

patients believe in the objective reality of God or are mere idolators or in the last resort are poor orphans of nothing, does not seem to matter to Jung in the slightest. 'Just as primitive man was able with the aid of religious and philosophical symbols to free himself from his original state, so the neurotic can shake off his illness. Not that belief in religious or philosophical dogma is to be thrust upon the patient. He is simply to resume that *psychological attitude* which in an earlier civilization, was characterized by a living belief in religious or philosophical dogma.' Not to put too fine a point on it, the 'religious outlook' Jung recommends is like a belief or rather a *pretended* belief in Santa Claus. Indeed, if Jung himself only *pretended* there *was* a God, one could more readily believe in the sincerity of his attempt to impose 'religious' convictions on all and sundry. As it is, the effect of his theological exertions is to reduce his former ideas as to the nature of individuation to nothing. At one time individuation represented to him 'the meaning of life'. This, at any rate, was a positive though rather vague assertion. But since he got his ideas mixed up with setting suns and Indian customs, this has disappeared in a mist of quasi-theological generalities which when evaporated leaves no residue. We are, seemingly, all part of something. But unless he believes there is a *Something not Ourselves* that makes for Righteousness, this is, theologically regarded, a mere manner of speaking. For the rest we are left with the *numinosum*, a religious sentiment or affect aroused by the *idea* of God, which in turn is a legacy from our primordial ancestors, springing directly from an innate disposition. This numinosum, its potential dangers neutralized by Dogma or Individuation, is the final spiritual comfort Jung has to offer his battered and baffled fellow men.

No doubt it will be argued that Jung himself cannot be held responsible for the credulity of those followers who regard him as a great religious or near-religious teacher. They may point out that he has himself disclaimed any intention of producing either a religious or a philosophic system. And in a formal sense both of these arguments are sound enough. For Jung is certainly no philosopher, still less a believer. No doubt, too, the increasing support given to Jungian psychology by clerics can be regarded less as a tribute to Jung's religiosity than as a reaction to Freud's view that religion is one of the illusions wherewith man seeks to soften the asperities of life and to stay the fundamental discontents

engendered by civilization. It is all the more necessary therefore to point out what is apparently effectively concealed in a mass of Jungian verbiage, that so far from being religious in tendency, Jung's system is fundamentally irreligious. Nobody is to care whether God exists, Jung least of all. All that is necessary is to 'experience' an 'attitude' because it helps one to live. Had Jung propounded this system in those Middle Ages, so dear to him because of their alchemical associations, he would certainly have been burned as a heretic. Apparently, too, he followed in the footsteps of his alchemical forbears. For just as they projected their unconscious phantasies in the form of chemical researches into the nature of matter, so Jung has projected into modern psychology a bevy of gods and goddesses masquerading as psychic concepts. If it be true that man gradually adds to the archetypal content of the Jungian Collective Unconscious, we may anticipate with some confidence that the Jungian system will some day acquire an archetypal *mana*. Perhaps it has already done so. For in addition to being a heretic, Jung is essentially an idolator who has created a multiplicity of gods within, and asks other people to enjoy the experience of thinking of them.

That the 'religious outlook' is not outwardly but inwardly directed towards the *archetypal idea* of God; that the Deity is the presumed unconscious attitude of our just-not-simian ancestors, preserved by a presumed process of just-not-quite-ideational inheritance; and that 'spirit' is just a Jungian synonym for the Collective Unconscious may or may not trouble Jungians and Christians: it is exactly the sort of thing that repelled the heathenish mind of Freud. Writing of the infantile origins of religion and of the rearguard actions fought in favour of religious systems by those who must see that they are not tenable, Freud remarked 'One would like to count oneself among the believers, so as to admonish the philosophers who try to preserve the God of religion by substituting for him an impersonal shadowy, abstract principle, and say "thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain!"' Although Jung is no philosopher and although he is less concerned to fight a rearguard action in defence of religion than to impregnate his own psychological system with an odour of sanctity, the admonition is one he nevertheless richly deserves.

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